MIDLANDS

THE UK'S BIGGEST REGIONAL GAY LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

ZONE

THE ESSENTIAL NIGHTLIFE + CLUBBING GUIDE

ISSUE 207 £1.60 JULY 2014

WICKED CASTS A SPELL ON THE MIDLANDS

Funky trunks

THIS SUMMER'S HOTTEST SWIMWEAR STYLES

INSIDE

DAVID MORGAN
THE GAY COMEDIAN'S EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

SUMMER OF PRIDE
YOUR GUIDE TO PRIDE FESTIVALS IN THE MIDLANDS

BEACH AND FOAM PARTIES
COME TO BIRMINGHAM'S GAY SCENE

ISSN 1462-7035

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This month...

06
Local Life Story: Martyn Parker

28
Funky trunks: This summer's hottest swimwear

10
Wicked casts its spell in the Midlands

30
WIN! WIN! WIN!

12
Exclusive interview with comedian David Morgan

54
What's On: A guide to music, theatre and film

15
Summer Of Pride: Your 10-page guide

59
Health & Grooming: There's a cure for baldness

REGULARS:

Local Life Story 6

News 8

Style: Gadgets 25

Style: Home 26

Style: Fashion 28

What's On 54

Books, DVDs & Music 57

LGBT Community 60

Escort Directory 62

Gay Classified 63

Sauna Directory 64

The Last Word 66

31 YOUR 22-PAGE GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON AT YOUR GAY VENUES

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The Editor's Note

Ryan Humphreys @ryanhumphreys

It's summer! Hurrah! Welcome to the July edition of Midlands Zone - we've got a great issue for you to digest, so once you've finished here, have a flick and read about Wicked, the smash-hit musical that's coming to the Midlands. Then read our interview with David Morgan - the Midlands' newest funnyman. And there's lots more besides...

Summer of Pride gets underway!

You should have finally recovered from Birmingham Pride now (I think I have, anyway), but the LGBT festival fun doesn't need to stop. There's a whole season of Pride events coming up over the next couple of months, starting off with L Fest, Stoke-on-Trent Pride, Nottinghamshire and more.

We've compiled a handy eight-page feature to give you the low-down on what's what, when and where. So all you need to worry about is turning up, having fun and partying the night away!

Remember, though, folks, Pride events shouldn't just be about the party. Remember why we still need to hold them. There's a lot left to be done for the LGBT community, both in the UK and abroad. There are still homophobic attacks happening on our doorsteps that MUST be erradicated.

A rise in STIs is a cause for alarm...

There's been fresh data released by Public Health England reporting that there were approximately 450,000 new STI diagnoses in England last year alone. I think you'll agree that that's an alarming statistic.

Breaking the data down, it revealed that gay men accounted for 81% of syphilis and 63% of gonorrhoea cases in male GUM clinic attendees last year.

Dr Rosemary Gillespie from Terrence Higgins Trust thinks the figures show that the approach to sex education isn't keeping pace with the 21st century. Whilst I completely agree with her, I think there's another possible explanation too. With the rapid pace of medical advancements - for example, the progress in treating STIs - I think many people are throwing caution to the wind and not looking after their sexual health.

With the ever-growing use of dating sites and apps such as Grindr, finding sex has never been easier. If you're going to have a bit of fun, just remember one thing - always wear a condom! It's not hard to remember, and it could save you a lot of health problems!

No to blood ban change

It was sad to read last month that the Department of Health has rejected calls by the Green Party to end the ban against gay and bisexual men donating blood within twelve months of having sex.

Whilst there's still an opportunity to give blood, (which up until 2011, gay and bisexual men couldn't do) there's still a lot of people calling for the ban to be scrapped altogether. The Green Party is one of them, and they raised the issue again, this time with the idea of individual evaluations based on the sexual behaviour of that person. Great idea right? Apparently not.

The Deparment of Health still claim there is a heightened risk from men who have sex with men, from viruses such as HIV and Hepatitis B.

I agree with the Green Party on this one - all blood that gets donated gets screened for viruses anyway, regardless of whether you're gay, straight, black or white. So why does there need to be a one year delay?

Anyway, that's all from me this month. I hope you have a great July, and I will be back in August!

Ryan x

What's Hot!

Tennis torsos!

As this issue goes to print, Wimbledon has just got underway. That means lots of sweaty - sometimes even topless - men playing with balls. Tennis balls, of course. We're big fans of Rafa Nadal and Roger Federer, so we'll be watching their ball control closely.

Brighton gets its very own Rainbow Crossing!

Following in the footsteps of cities across the world, Brighton now has its very own Rainbow Crossing, right in the heart of the city. The multi-coloured zebra crossing was launched by lesbian singer-songwriter Heather Peace. The public are advised, however, that they shouldn't use it as a crossing.

What's Not!

DWV split up!

Sad news came last month that drag supergroup DWV are to split. They've just done a mini-tour of the UK, so if you managed to catch them, we think you're very lucky. The Boy Is A Bottom stars will be missed!

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Martyn Parker

Chairperson
Leicester Pride

Born: **Leicester**
Star sign: **Virgo**
Age: **31**

Each month we take a look at someone from the Midlands LGBT community. This month, our focus turns on Martyn Parker, Chairperson of Leicester Pride.

About Martyn

Where did you grow up?
Leicestershire, born and bred.

Single or attached?
Happily attached to David. We've been together nearly two years, after meeting on holiday.

What makes you happy?
Vodka! No, seriously... When I put my time and effort into something and it all comes together. Pride is one of my best achievements.

What makes you sad?
Disloyalty and lies.

What makes you angry?
Discrimination of any form. We're all equal, bleed the same, breathe the same and should be treated the same, regardless of creed, colour, sexual orientation, social standing, ability, disability and age.

If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?
My nose! The fact that I trust too easily. Sometimes I fall into a trap and get stung for it. Sorry - very cynical, I know, but that's who I am.

What's been the most embarrassing thing you've done in your life?
Dressed up as a butterfly, aged 12 - in a skintight leotard with wings - and paraded through Leicester with the Caribbean carnival. Not a pretty sight. I avoid embarrassing situations at all costs.

Now that same-sex marriage has been legalised, would you consider getting married?
It's not something I've really thought about. As long as you're happy, that's all that matters. Possibly in the future. Who knows? You may get an invite!

Coming Out

When did you first know you were gay?
About age 14. I started acting up at school and home, generally being a pain.

When did you come out?
I came out when I was 18.

What was school like for you as a gay teenager?
Hard, as the guys hated the fact I got on well with the girls. They bullied me for it, name-calling - faggot, puff, queer - and occasionally being physically violent. I got through it by believing in myself, having a great circle of friends, and hoping it wouldn't always be that way.

Who was the first person you told, and what was their reaction?
My friend, Skye. I remember being nervous and scared. We went to a café and I sat her down to tell her, expecting a negative reaction. She gave me a hug, told me she already knew, and then said, "Are we going out, then?"! She was fantastic; I love her to bits.

What would you say to a youngster trying to come to terms with their own sexuality?
I would try to convince them that it's fine to be who you are, as long as you're happy and contented. Set your expectations high; you can overcome negativity from others. Build a strong network of people and gather information to support you. This is why I chose to volunteer at the youth group First Out, where I met some amazing and inspirational people who had the strength and courage to believe in themselves, and to go out and get what they deserved in life.

Have you ever had any experiences with the opposite sex?
Yes, when I was younger. A girl who I'm still friends with.

Leicester Pride

You're the Chair of Leicester Pride. What made you get involved with the event?
Myself and a great team of others wanted to provide the Leicester community with a festival to be proud of and which celebrated the diversity in our city. We wanted to make it a family event that all ages could attend. And we wanted it to be for those still finding their way, and to offer lots of support and friendly faces so that they could approach without fear of prejudice. Above all, we wanted to create a great day out.

What are the drawbacks of organising Leicester Pride?
Well, I've been doing this now for six years. Long, unpaid hours; sleepless nights; paperwork; and criticism from others.

And how about the highlights?
Seeing the event come together and watching thousands of happy people enjoying it. Pride also provides a platform for people to find the courage to communicate who they are to others. And it's fantastic looking at the photos of the event and seeing the mixture of communities coming together and enjoying themselves.

What challenges do you face in organising a big event like Pride?
Where do you start?! The biggest challenge every year is finance. The hardest part is gaining funding from local businesses, the council, and generally getting everything together. There are endless meetings to attend with the local police and council regarding health and safety, road closures, policing on the day. People don't realise the amount of work that goes on behind the scenes - even things like sourcing decent toilet facilities for the event at a reasonable price. We're lucky to have the support of a local funfair - they always provide us with some fantastic rides for the event. Then there are the stalls, the food and drink, and the numerous charity stands that attend - and not forgetting the parade itself. The parade's always fun. Each year it seems to get bigger and bigger, with all ages joining us on the march from Leicester city centre to Victoria Park.

In an ideal world, what would you like to see Leicester Pride achieve?
Equality and harmony.

Do you think that Pride events are becoming too commercial and losing their original message?
At Leicester Pride we're trying very hard to ensure this doesn't happen by using as many local businesses as possible. Wherever we can, we source local acts and concessions. We feel that all Prides are supporting their local area as much as possible, but it's sometimes difficult not to lose sight of what Pride actually stands for.

Where would you like to see Leicester Pride in five years' time?
We'd like to see the festival bigger, but not so big that it loses its personal touch. At the moment, it feels like you're going to a big festival with all your friends. You always know someone there, and feel safe and comfortable. We'd like to see the annual Leicester Pride Ball become more of a fixture too, and become as well known as the Pride event itself.

Martyn at Leicester Pride 2013 with Miss Penny & Miss Thunderpussy

When you're not organising Pride, what do you do for work?

I sell houses - new-builds; helping clients and families achieve their dreams.

What did you want to be when you were older?

A vet, but I realised very quickly that it wasn't for me.

Where do you want to be in five years' time?

On a beach in Barbados.

Gay Scene

How long have you been frequenting the Midlands gay scene and what's your earliest memory?

I've been going out on the scene for about 13 years. My first memory was bumping into tranny Simon, who got me extremely drunk. He still does that, even to this day!

Who's your favourite cabaret act on the gay scene?

There are too many great and amazing acts to choose from.

Who's your favourite person on the gay scene?

No one in particular. I have many great friends who support me in what I do.

What do you most enjoy about the gay scene?

Diversity and a friendly atmosphere, where you can be who you are without judgement.

What have you noticed about the way the gay scene has changed over the years?

It's become more obvious that it's not just the LGBTs enjoying the scene. It's become a place for everyone to enjoy themselves.

How would you change the Midlands' gay scene?

I wouldn't change anything, although I feel there's a need for places for the younger, under-18 generation to meet, where they can feel safe.

Time Out

Where do you go on a night out?

I go out around Leicester and the Midlands area.

What do you do to relax?

There's not much time for that, as I'm always working on Pride. A long, hot bath is great, though.

What do you enjoy on telly?

NCIS and Modern Family.

What was the last album or track you bought?

I'm embarrassed to say, but it was the Frozen soundtrack - how rock and roll am I?

Which type of holiday do you prefer?

White sandy beaches, of course. Hot, hot, hot! My time to relax and unwind.

Which one website do you spend the most time on?

Leicester Pride, of course.

Quickfire

Who's your favourite actor?

Julia Roberts.

What's your favourite book?

Midlands Zone.

Half-empty or half-full?

Half-full; there's always more to achieve.

What's your favourite food?

Chinese.

And how about your favourite drink?

Coffee... vodka.

Madonna or Lady Gaga?

Madonna.

Gaydar or Grindr?

Grindr.

If you could take a selfie with one person alive or dead, who would it be?

Cher. She's inspiring and empowering.

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What's On
MAGAZINE GROUP
THE UK'S LARGEST REGIONAL LEISURE PUBLISHERS

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PRIDE Midlands LGBT community gears up for a busy summer of local Pride festivals

With Birmingham Pride having kicked off the Midlands Pride season back in May, the region's LGBT community is now gearing itself up for plenty more local festivals throughout the next few months.

Gloucestershire Pride took place last month, bringing together a colourful parade and plenty of entertainment.

Coming in July is the UK's biggest gay women's festival, L Fest, which takes place between Friday the 18th and Monday the 21st at Uttoxeter Racecourse in Staffordshire.

A scaled-back Nottinghamshire Pride is also planned for the end of the month (on Saturday 26 July). The event will commence with a parade, which will start from outside Nottingham's Council House and wind its way through the city to the Lace Market area, where festivities will continue.

Early August sees the fourth annual Shrewsbury Pink Picnic taking place in the town's Quarry (Saturday the 2nd), with members of the town's LGBT community encouraged to attend.

Gay Family Pride takes place at Barnswood Scout Camp in Staffordshire between Friday 8 and Monday 11 August, and Stoke-on-Trent Pride returns to Northwood Park on Saturday 9 August.

For a full rundown of Pride events in the Midlands, and special previews of the events mentioned above, check out our Summer Of Pride feature on page 15.

CRIME Police appeal after homophobic incident

Officers from Leicestershire Police are investigating a homophobic incident at a takeaway in the city centre and have released a CCTV image of two men they wish to identify and trace in connection with the incident.

The incident took place just after 2am on Friday 18 April at a fast food takeaway in Granby Street. Two men entered the premises and began making homophobic comments towards customers.

A member of staff challenged the men and was then assaulted. He sustained minor injuries to his face.

Anyone with information in relation to the incident should contact PC 859 Guy Wilkinson by dialling 101. Alternatively, contact Crimestoppers, which is free and anonymous, on 0800 555 111.

PRIDE Birmingham Pride holds thank you party for Ambassadors

Organisers of Birmingham Pride held a special VIP thank you party last month for the festival's volunteers and Pride Ambassadors - led by Pat Wilson-Smith and Keith Perks - who gave up their time to help during the two-day event in May.

The party, which was held at RSVP on Hurst Street, included drinks, food and entertainment.

Birmingham Pride Festival Director Lawrence Barton commented: "Whilst tens of thousands of people attended Birmingham Pride in May, there was a large team of Pride Ambassadors who gave up their time to help ensure the smooth running of the event.

"Without their help, we wouldn't have been able to put Birmingham Pride on. We wanted to thank the volunteers for all of the hard work, time and dedication they gave to Pride, particularly Keith and Pat for a job well done in organising the team."

ACTIVISM Birmingham activist group concerned with gay scene monopoly of Pride

The newly formed LGBTQ Activist Group have raised concerns at a meeting that Birmingham Pride is being run as a monopoly by Birmingham's gay scene.

At the meeting, the group's common interest was with the commercialisation of the Midlands' biggest LGBT festival, and the monopoly that the city's gay scene had on the event.

Members of the group raised concerns that in their opinion, although there used to be a committee involving both bar owners and community members, this was no longer the case, meaning the community was no longer involved in the organisation of the event.

Alternative Pride events for the city were suggested, which would be free and accessible to a wider part of the community.

Birmingham Pride's Festival Director, Lawrence Barton commented on the news: "We're always happy to receive valid observations and feedback from everyone about the festival.

"We do feel that communication with the city's LGBTQ community needs to be more robust, but we feel we've moved forward in terms of how the event has been organised. The community has a voice and we welcomed feedback and suggestions not only through social media, but in the recruitment of volunteers and getting the community involved in Pride.

"When we start the process of organising the event, we consult with all of the independent venue owners about their involvement in the festival, and follow up with them after the event also.

"We have consulted with Steve Ball and Simon Askew, and they've become key links in arranging the Community Village Green in 2015, where we have the full support of the Birmingham Pride Trust".

The group, which uses the slogan Pride Is A Protest! Pride Not Profit!, was set up in an effort to bring about a change within Birmingham's LGBTQ community following this year's Spring Bank Holiday festival and held their inaugural meeting last month at the Birmingham LGBT Centre.

SCENE Refurbishments for Midlands gay venues

Walsall's major gay venue The Lion Bar & Club is currently undergoing a significant refurbishment as part of a three-year plan.

Venue manager Zac Humpage commented: "We've started work on refurbishing and restoring the first half of the venue, codenamed Project 26. The project is scheduled to take around ten weeks to complete, but there'll be no interruption to the day-to-day running of the venue.

"Details of the plans are being kept tightly under wraps at this stage, but will be released over the coming weeks. The mid-term business plan for the

venue outlines a £200,000 investment over three years. Project 25 was completed in 2013, Project 26 will be completed in 2014 and Project 27 next year."

Meanwhile, Bar Jester, on Holloway Circus in Birmingham, also underwent a major refurbishment late last month. The downstairs club at the venue has been modernised, with air-conditioning added.

Over in Wolverhampton, the gay venue previously known as The Greyhound has re-opened its doors under the new name Bond Street Tavern, following a major refit.

The newly modernised venue is set to offer its patrons a chilled-out atmosphere.

POLICE Gloucestershire's Chief Constable reveals she's a lesbian

Gloucestershire's Chief Constable Suzette Davenport has come out, and revealed that she's gay at the county's recent Pride festival.

The Gloucester Citizen reports: 'Ms Davenport, who is head of Gloucestershire Police, received huge cheers and applause after telling the crowds that she is gay.

'She said: "It is not tattooed on my forehead but I don't hide it either. I could have stood up and talked about facts and figures but people would have switched off. Instead I thought it would be better to talk about something more personal to me. The police have made significant progress on these issues, and we are much better than some public sector organisations, but there is still some room to improve. "We have low levels of hate crime in Gloucestershire too. They are significantly below the national average. But I want people to understand hate crime. I know what it feels like, having been through it myself."'

NATIONAL NEWS

EDUCATION Charity launches video outlining risks of recent HIV infection

HIV and sexual health charity Terrence Higgins Trust has launched a short video clip for gay and bisexual men, outlining the risks of recent infection - the initial period after HIV is contracted, when a person is super-infectious but won't yet know they have the virus - and urging men to use condoms with new or casual partners.

The clip 'Ben and Will', which can be viewed at www.tht.org.uk/BenandWill, has been released as part of It Starts With Me, the flagship campaign from Terrence Higgins Trust and HIV Prevention England (HPE).

HEALTH Older generation with HIV need more support, say nurses

The older generation of people with HIV need better support to keep them well, nurses say.

BBC News reports: 'About a quarter of the 100,000 people with HIV in the UK are aged over 50.

'Two-thirds of these are on treatment for other long-term conditions - twice the rate for the general population, Terrence Higgins Trust data shows.

'The charity and the Royal College of Nursing said this "silent generation" of older HIV patients need better co-ordinated care to stay healthy.

POLITICS Stonewall in move to embrace trans campaigning

Leading gay campaign organisation Stonewall has invited transgender activists to 'initial' talks about the future of trans campaigning.

Gay Star News reports: 'Some trans activists have previously criticised Stonewall for excluding them. Others have argued that independent trans activism would be destroyed by Stonewall becoming fully LGBT.

'The move appears to be spearheaded by Ruth Hunt, acting CEO of Stonewall, who has adopted a policy of greater communication and coordination with the wider LGBTI community since starting her new role earlier this year.'

There's something Wicked

One of 'the most popular West End musicals ever' casts its spell over Midlands audiences this month when Wicked flies into Birmingham as part of its first UK tour. So what's it like to be Defying Gravity? And how do you know if you're Popular? Emily Tierney (Glinda) and Nikki Davis-Jones (Elphaba) talk about what it means to be playing musical theatre's most sought-after roles...

Are you a Glinda or an Elphaba? This, says Emily Tierney, is the question nowadays echoing around every drama school corridor - well, at least among those students who one day hope to star in Wicked. So which witch are you? White or green? Good or wicked? Are you 'Popular', or do you dream of 'Defying Gravity'?

For Tierney and fellow actress Nikki Davis-Jones, these questions now have answers. The pair are taking the lead roles in Wicked's first ever UK and Ireland tour, stopping off in Birmingham from 9 July. And while neither performer is entirely new to the show, they still can't believe their luck.

"Wicked is so appealing because it's very rare that you get two such big, meaty, female leads," says Tierney, whose first professional job was in Wicked's London ensemble five years ago. "And they're so different. Everyone I knew at drama school wanted to play one or the other."

Tierney was walking through Leicester Square when she heard she'd got the part of Glinda for a second time (she recently played her in The Wizard Of Oz too). "My agent phoned and asked if I was sitting down. I had to run into an alleyway. I burst into tears. I was laughing and hysterical at the same time."

For Nikki Davis-Jones, until recently the stand-in Elphaba in the West End, it feels amazing to finally own the part. "I first watched it with (Broadway's original Elphaba) Idina Menzel. I remember mum asking if I'd like to do the show, and me saying that I'd love to, but that there was nothing in it for me; the part was too big. A few years later, here I am.

We're chatting in a rehearsal room in east London, where every surface is awash with green. Green sunglasses, green babies - even a green cake that a cast member's mum has made for someone's birthday. Welcome to the Emerald City!

> "When you're flying and singing that song, you feel like you're on top of the world"

For those new to the Wicked phenomenon, the musical is based on Gregory Maguire's 1995 book, Wicked: The Life And Times Of The Wicked Witch Of The West, which riffs off the Oz story, stepping over Dorothy's ruby slippers to concentrate on the witches instead. This is the back-story for why one ends up good and the other, er, wicked.

On stage, we first meet the characters as students of the University of Shiz.

"Glinda's grown up a real daddy's girl, having everything on a plate," explains Tierney. "She's never been told no. Then, suddenly, she meets this character who she doesn't understand."

Elphaba, meanwhile, is green and "completely misunderstood from birth," says Davis-Jones. "Nobody likes her. And because of how she's been treated all her life, she just wants justice for others too. She's a bit of a campaigner, our Elphaba. She'd definitely be out on all the marches!"

Despite loathing each other on first acquaintance - dueting "there's a strange exhilaration in such total detestation" - it's no spoiler to say the characters develop a friendship so strong that even a couple of love interests (played by the girls' real-life buddies Liam Doyle and George Ure) can't throw them off course. "They have this amazing bond, and change each other really dramatically," says Tierney. "Everyone wants a friendship like that. I think that's why people really connect with Wicked."

And why bona fide actresses are clamouring to be cast in the show, she adds. "It's great. We get to play them at the beginning, when they're young. Elphaba's angry and Glinda's a spoilt brat. And then they go on this big old journey to see the Wizard and the Emerald City. By the end of the show, they're completely different people. Elphaba's fallen in love; Glinda's learned so much, she's actually quite moral."

The duo have just finished rehearsing Popular, a fabulously frothy number that sees Glinda give Elphaba the regulation spruce-up. "When someone needs a makeover, I simply have to take over," she yodels in the show.

"I was terrified about doing Popular," confesses Tierney. "Glinda literally doesn't sit still. She's jumping around all over the place. There's a lot

coming to the Midlands...

to remember, but I'm loving doing it now. I love all the numbers I do with Nikki because we get to have such a giggle. We've got to try and hate each other - it's not going to be easy."

It's harder still to pick a favourite song - she says, "For Good is such a beautiful one to sing. But I also love No Good Deed. I saw Nikki do it and ran down the corridor like a crazy fan."

"They're all iconic songs," says Nikki - but even she can't deny which number is the most iconic. When the TV show Glee devoted a whole episode to it, it was clear that Defying Gravity had moved from musical theatre into the mainstream.

"When you're flying and singing that song, you feel like you're on top of the world," says Nikki. "It's such a powerful feeling. This is the turning point, where Elphaba is revealed as the witch for the first time. I've got the broom, the hat, the cape - and I'm off. You can't help but be lifted. I've got little goosebumps thinking about it."

And vocally, adds Tierney - it's incredibly challenging. "I remember being at drama school and everyone wanted to sing Defying Gravity. Everyone tried, but so few could do it."

If Elphaba wins in the song stakes, Glinda certainly lucks out with her wardrobe. "I put her bubble dress on the other day for a photo shoot and got so choked up," says Tierney. "They were telling me not to cry, because they'd just done all my make-up. But it's overwhelming. Someone asked if I could choose which costume was my favourite, but I couldn't. They're each individually designed. So many hours of work go into them, all the beading. I don't think I've done a show before where you get such attention to detail, that scale of costume and set."

Nikki agrees. "My Act Two costume is so sexy - right in at the waist, and all the frills are so flattering. They made it first in a sack material, to get the cut. Margie, our head of wardrobe, told me to stand up straight and be in character. And now the dress is made like that. So I can't 'Hunchback of Notre Dame' it anyway - it's really good for my posture."

What about going green every night?

"She looks amazing," gushes Tierney. "She's got her own colour of green - the Nikki green."

"It's so strange," says Nikki. "I didn't realise how different everyone's shade is to their skin. The director says I'm prettier green than in real life."

The girls agree that the costumes really help to get them in character. "I keep wearing little skirts in the rehearsal room," says Tierney. "I don't feel Glinda-ry if I don't. But the other day, I went home and put the grungiest gear on - I'd outgirled even myself."

With just weeks to go till opening night, nerves are rising for both actresses. "I keep having really manic stress dreams," Tierney gulps. "I think it's getting my head around taking on the mantle. We've seen so many Elphabas and Glindas - they're iconic. But they've told us that they're our parts now and we've got to find our own way into them."

And what about the high notes of that song? How does Nikki find her way into those?

"I get waves of nerves, usually in the scene before Defying Gravity," she admits. "But by the time it comes, you're so in the emotional moment. And to be honest, if you're totally in it, you don't even notice the singing. It just comes out and it feels amazing. And at the end of it all, when the show's happened, you just think, 'Oh my god - I love my job - I'm the luckiest girl around'."

WICKED FACTS!

- Wicked has already been seen by thirty-seven million people worldwide.
- In Gregory Maguire's original novel, Elphaba's first word as a young infant is 'horrors', a clear indication of what's to come.
- The original Broadway production remains Broadway's biggest-ever blockbuster.
- Wicked's costume department uses over one hundred-and-seventy-nine different types and finishes of leather.
- The musical's open-ended run at the Apollo Victoria Theatre is already the sixteenth longest-running musical in West End Theatre history.
- The West End production is soon to enter its eighth year and reach its three thousandth performance at The Apollo.
- Wicked has won over ninety international awards, including the Olivier Award for Most Popular Show.

DAVID MORGAN

"When I started in comedy, I didn't want to be a gay comedian, I wanted to be a comedian who just happened to be gay"

Midlands gay comedian David Morgan may be relatively new to the comedy scene, but the Solihull boy is certainly 'on the up'. Here, he talks to Midlands Zone's Ryan Humphreys about what it's like to be making his way in the rough, tough world of stand-up alongside other gay comedians like Alan Carr, Stephen K Amos and fellow Midlander Joe Lycett...

You come from the Midlands. Have you read Midlands Zone in the past?
Are you joking? I used to read it every month when I went out in Birmingham. I'd try to spot myself in the Saturday night pictures!

You're from Solihull. What's the most exciting thing to do there?
Leave! Well, I used to work at TGI Fridays, and that was quite fun. I've not been back for ages though. It's a tough question, because I used to try and escape Solihull as much as possible getting the train into Birmingham for a night out and then getting a taxi home at least four days a week. So yes, leaving is probably the best thing to do.

You now live in London. How's life in 'the big smoke'?
It's the same, just busier - and with more fun things to do than Solihull! When I used to go out in Birmingham, I'd bump into the same people. If you went to Route on a Monday, you'd bump into the same people on a Saturday. I quite liked that community aspect of Birmingham, which you don't get as much of in London.

When did you first realise you were funny?
I first realised at school. I used to make jokes to deflect attention from anything else. I used jokes to make the bullies like me. I thought that if they found me funny, they'd be less likely to punch me. I was really quiet as a child. My mum decided that I needed to come out of my shell a bit more, so sent me to drama class. I always got the comedy roles there, because I made things funny rather than dramatic.

If you weren't a comedian, what do you think you'd be doing instead?
Until I started with the stand-up, I had a real job as a graphic designer so that's what I think I'd still be doing.

In comedy, who would you say your main influences are?
Oh my! I get influenced from outside stand-up comedy. Things like musicals, or I like to see comedians who do things that I do, as I'm quite anecdotal. So I go and see people like Terry Law, Paul Foot and John Kearns, who are incredible. They inspire me to think outside the box. I also get influenced by really good television. The show I'm doing this year is actually inspired by RuPaul's Drag Race and other reality shows like Extreme Couponing.

From where do you get your ideas and material? Is it all 'true to life'?
As I say, my shows are quite anecdotal. The first show I did was about a homophobic thing that happened to me and what it meant to me. Last year's show, Pretty, was about my looks being a problem for me. This year's is about how inadequately prepared I am for situations on social media. All the stories that I tell might not be entirely true, but they do have a grain of truth. I tend to find that, if you have a comedian who's telling anecdotal stories and you don't believe them, it's not funny. So I try to keep it as true to life as possible.

You're heading to Edinburgh this month with your new show. Tell us about it.
I'm socially awkward anyway. I became a stand-up comedian so I could be out most evenings! There's stuff that happens on social media now that you're not prepared for. The big one that happened to me recently was awkward. I came out as gay whilst at school, when I was fifteen. As far as I knew, I was the only gay person in school. I thought the only reason I wasn't having sex with anyone was because there was nobody to have sex with, and I was okay with that. Recently, though, I was on the gay social app Hornet, where you can search in other places for guys - unlike Grindr, where you can only search in your local area. So I searched Solihull whilst I was in London, to see how bleak life would be if I were still there. It wasn't too bad, actually; there are quite a few hotties in Solihull. Anyway, I came across a boy who'd been in my year at school. I panicked and started chatting to him. I had no idea he was gay whilst we were at school. As we were chatting, I started to realise that, even though I hadn't known he was gay, he'd known that I was. So there was me in school thinking I wasn't having sex because there was nobody to have sex with, but there he was living a life where he preferred to spend his teenage years not having sex rather than having sex with me! I felt a sense of time-shifted rejection, which was really strange.
Another example is when I was invited to a wedding - to both the ceremony and the party, but not the meal. So we had a three-and-a-half-hour gap, where we had to go and get our own food. People who were at the meal were posting photos on Facebook and Twitter. I was scrolling through a party that I wasn't invited to! The new show is full of stuff like that, where you don't quite know how to deal with things.

Is there anything that people coming to see your show should know before they turn up?
Do you mean am I going to be mean to them? I'm very nice. I chat to the audience quite a bit, because it keeps the show interesting for me. I'm quite nice and kind, I think, and I don't pick on people either.

What's the worst heckle you've ever received?
The worst ones are the devastating ones that you can't come back from. I've only properly had two 'deaths'. One was in Kent. The audience was packed in, and having been there for three or four hours, were all eating food. So when I came out, they just didn't want to listen to me at all. I did some material, opening up with some stuff about my sexuality, and they weren't going for it at all. The heckle wasn't really to me, but to the next act when he came on. Someone shouted, "Oh God, you're not gay too, are ya?". He responded, "Well, technically, I'm bisexual". That was quite devastating for me, as I had to keep going back out throughout the show. The final act was straight but a transvestite, and for this show he was going to wear 'boy clothes', but as soon as the audience started being dicks to the other acts, he thought fuck it, went upstairs to put on his make-up and a dress, then stomped out onto the stage.

You join an ever-growing list of gay comedians. Do you think there's something about being fabulous and funny?
Yes, there's something about gay people telling stories. You have to make it entertainment, otherwise we get bored very easily. That's why we have to have drag - so there's lots of glitter to keep our attention. Maybe there's something about being gay that makes you funny. I think it might be a slight defence mechanism, to counteract any nastiness.

So you regularly bring your sexuality into your shows?
When I started, I didn't want to be a gay comedian. I wanted to be a comedian who just happened to be gay. I didn't want to talk about it all the time. When I started doing gigs, I never used to mention it at all, until I slipped up and mentioned something, and the audience made an audible "Ooooh, that's what it is". I felt like I was hiding it from people. In comedy, what's great is that you can be incredibly personal. If I was ignoring the gay part of my life, I'd be cutting out so much of it. I've had a boyfriend for eight years, and I've been gay for my entire life. If I didn't talk about it, it'd be ridiculous. Not all of my comedy is about it, especially now that being gay is becoming less and less of a thing. You can't really shock people with gayness anymore.

Does your boyfriend find you funny?
He does, but he wouldn't tell me that he does, because he doesn't want to make my ego any bigger than it already is. He's brilliant; he's so supportive and awesome. He's my biggest critic in the best kind of way, because we know each other so well and have known each other for so long. If he thinks I'm being lazy or a joke is crap, then he'll tell me.

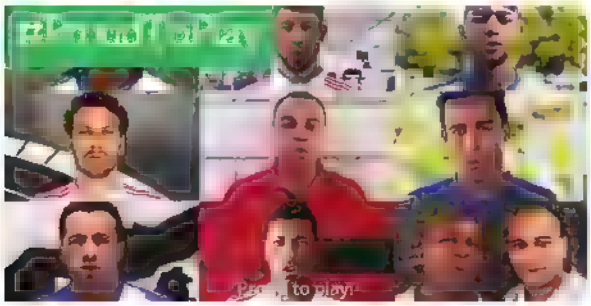
You can catch David Morgan at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe with his show, Social Tool, from Wednesday 30 July until Sunday 24 August.

THE VIRAL ROUND-UP

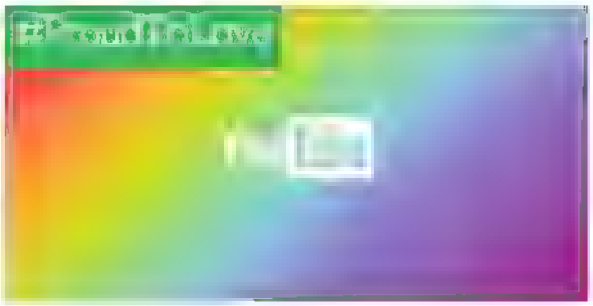
Here's what we've been looking at online...

We all do it - spend hours on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. Often, we're distracted from what we should be doing by cat videos and funny pranks - or by something feelgood that's been shared so much on the net it's officially classed as 'viral'. Well, here are some of Midlands Zone's favourites from the past month!

WATCH THIS! The best videos on the net...



Responding to a summer of major sporting events, YouTube has created a moving video to promote the fact that, despite your sexuality, you should be #ProudToPlay. Check out this inspirational video: youtu.be S14QJcl4KNs



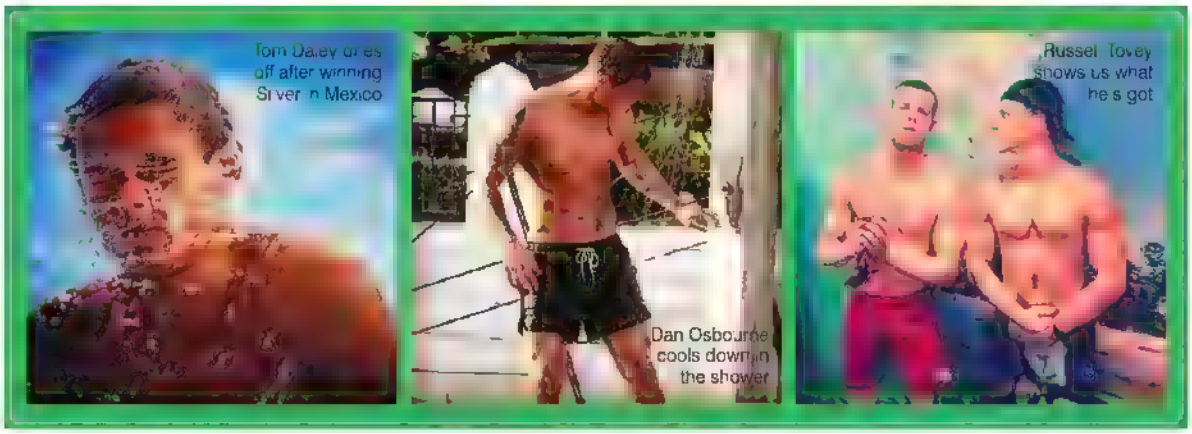
Alongside its #ProudToPlay video, YouTube has released #ProudToLove too. A truly inspirational and moving tribute to the LGBT community across the world, this video might leave you a bit teary-eyed! youtu.be/mDm0zsw9vJY

What if gays said the things straight people say?

"I don't give off a straight vibe, do I?"

We've heard it all before, the things our straight pals say to us: "Oh, my friend is gay, you'd love him." Or, "I'm not homophobic, I have loads of gay friends." Well, in a humourous twist, this video takes these sayings and flips them round, with fun results: "Before I met you, I used to hate straight people, but you really opened my eyes." You get the idea. If you've got a couple of minutes to kill, be sure to take a look. It's amassed millions of viewings already, and we highly recommend it. Check it out on YouTube here: youtu.be/hyijkJxgIXw

SNAP HAPPY! Our favourites from Instagram...


Tom Daley dries off after winning Silver in Mexico
Dan Osbourne cools down in the shower
Russel Tovey shows us what he's got

SUMMER OF PRIDE

8 PAGE

GUIDE TO LGBT EVENTS

INCLUDES:

GLOUCESTER PRIDE | L FEST | Cay FAMILY PRIDE | NOTTINGHAM PRIDE | STOKE ON TRENT PRIDE | SHREWSBURY PRIDE

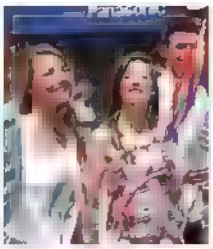
SUMMER OF PRIDE

Hundreds turn out for annual **Gloucestershire Pride** parade

Last month saw the return of Gloucestershire's annual Pride festival and parade - and the sun was out too!

Hundreds of people turned up to watch the colourful parade make its way through the city's streets, finally arriving at Gloucester Park, where a day of fun and activities awaited.

Organisers of the event hailed it the biggest and busiest Gloucestershire Pride ever.



LIVE. LIFE. LAUGH. LOVE. LADIES

WWW.LFEST.CO.UK

2014

JULY 18-21ST 2014

THE UK'S AWARD WINNING LESBIAN MUSIC, ARTS & COMEDY FESTIVAL

Live music / Arts / Poetry / Cinema / Comedy
Workshops / Family area / Solos zone
Sports, games & 3 nights camping

WEEKEND TICKETS £99 CHILDREN U16 FREE. DAY TICKETS AVAILABLE

UTTOXETER RACECOURSE, STAFFORDSHIRE, ST14 8BD. GATES OPEN AT 1PM FRI 18TH

@L FEST EVENTS @LFESTEVENTS

Saturday 23rd August

Walsall Pride

Gallery Square
Walsall Town Centre
11am-5pm

HEADLINE ACTS:
Jo Omeara from 'S Club7'
X-factor's Diva Fever
Luke Upton

DJ: Scott Superyam Merret

PLUS TRIBUTE ACTS FOR:
Lady Gaga (Sammy Lines)
Mizz Pink! (Stacy Green)
Cher (Stacy Green)
Amy Winehouse (Ashan Knowles)
80s Live duo (Mr Presidents)
The Madhouse Brothers (Ska Duo)
Blues Brothers: (The Jailhouse Blues Brothers)
Shirley Bassey (Rachael Roberts)
Take That (Take @ That)
Abba (Abbasolute)
Caro Emerald (Rachel Ball)
Paloma Faith (Paula Swann Sully)
Kylie Minogue (Suzy Hopwood)
Katy Perry (Caroline Coupe)
Freddie Mercury (Jamie Connolly)

Main stage

Cabaret marquee
at The Red Lion

Market stalls
Health and Well Being Area

Full weekend of entertainment
at the Lion Bar & Club

Dance arena

Website: www.walsallpride.org www.facebook.com/walsallpride?fref=ts @walsallpride

L Fest - the biggest and best lesbian festival returns for 2014

Friday 18 - Monday 21 July

Uttoxeter Racecourse, Staffordshire

www.lfest.co.uk

Since making its debut on the Midlands gay events calendar in 2011, L Fest has gone from strength to strength.
It's one of the biggest lesbian festivals in the world, and recently headed to Spain for a spin-off event called L Fest Del Mar.

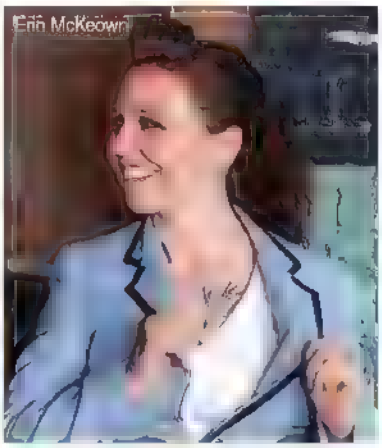
The four-day get-together, which takes place at the spacious Uttoxeter Racecourse in Staffordshire offers a whole host of entertainment, ranging from live music and comedy to sports, arts and workshops. There's even an on-site cinema.

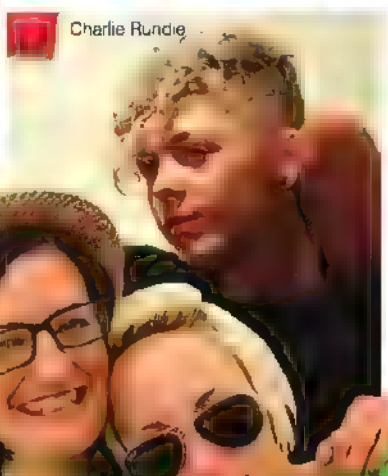
With camping areas for groups and solos, everyone is catered for. Visitors can enjoy the festival for just one day or the entire weekend.

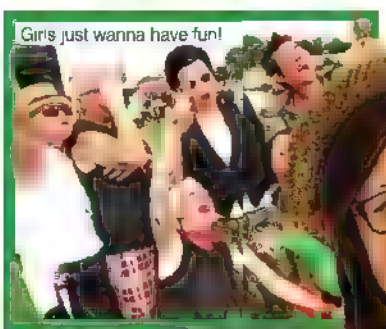
Headlining acts for this year's music stages are Erin McKeown, Never The Bride and Al Start Band. L Fest favourites Beth Prior, Faye Bagley and Grey Matter all make a welcome return too.

There are over sixty different acts performing across the festival, so visit www.lfest.co.uk to check out the full line-up.

L Fest takes place from Friday 18 to Monday 21 July at Uttoxeter Racecourse in Staffordshire. Tickets are now available online at www.lfest.co.uk.







Summer fun in Shropshire at Shrewsbury's Pink Picnic

Saturday 2 August

The Quarry, Shrewsbury

www.lgbtshrewsbury.co.uk

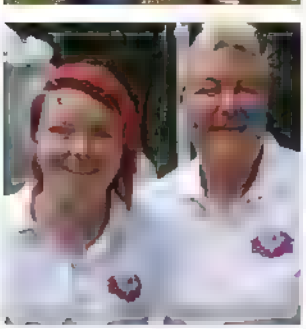
Shrewsbury's annual Pink Picnic returns to the Shropshire market town early next month.

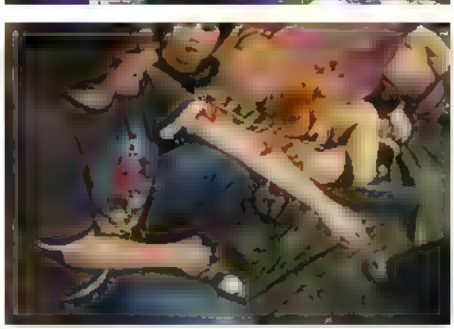
Taking place alongside the picturesque River Severn, in the stunning surroundings of The Quarry – Shrewsbury's largest public park – the event offers members of the town's LGBT community the chance to enjoy a relaxing afternoon in the sun.

LGBTs and their friends are encouraged to pop along with a blanket, sandwiches and drinks for a great day of socialising and (hopefully!) sunbathing

The Shrewsbury Pink Picnic takes place in The Quarry, Shrewsbury, on Saturday 2 August.

Staffordshire's bringing families together at Gay Family Pride





Friday 8 - Monday 11 August

Barnswood Scout Camp, Nr. Leek

www.familyprideuk.co.uk

Returning for 2014 is the ever-popular Gay Family Pride festival in Staffordshire.

Spread across four days, there's plenty to see and do for family members of all ages. Fun for the kids is provided courtesy of an adventure playground inflatable slides, magic, balloon modelling, face painting and games galore!

There's entertainment for the oldies too, with music throughout the weekend.

So if you're stuck for ideas about what to do in the school holidays, take a trip to Gay Family Pride and make some new friends

Gay Family Pride takes place from Friday 8 to Monday 11 August at Barnswood Scout Camp, near Leek.

SUMMER OF PRIDE

Nottinghamshire Pride promises an 'awesome' day out

Saturday 26 July

Lace Market Square, Nottingham

www.nottinghamshirepride.co.uk

Despite being slightly scaled back for 2014, Nottinghamshire Pride is nonetheless set to be 'an awesome day', according to its organisers.

The festival will kick off with a march from the Old Market Square at 11.30am through the city's streets to Hockley

The day's entertainment begins at noon in the Lace Market Square, where a Main Stage will provide live music and plenty more

There are even craft and information stalls to visit on Heathcoat Street

FAMILY PRIDE FESTIVAL 2014

8th - 11th August

Barnswood Scout Camp

3pm Friday until 5pm Monday

Music/Singers: Kings Gambit, Tarantism Acoustic, Kim Brunt

Workshops: The Cuddly Bear, Pink Faces, Bazerkas Circus, Animal Corner Eastnor Pottery & The Flying Potter, Kids Cookery Classes, Magic & Balloon Modelling

Activities: UV Disco, Bouncy Castle, Adventure Playground, Treasure Hunt Little Tots Play Are plus much much more to come

COME ALONG AND ENJOY THE FUN IN THE BEAUTIFUL STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTRYSIDE

Find us on facebook

www.familyprideuk.co.uk

Call: 0121 350 9217 / 0776 669 0706

Come to the **Gaylife Health Zone** to access information about Sexual Health, HIV testing, FREE Condoms and Lubricant

Have a great Stoke Pride 2014 and remember always be safe. We look forward to seeing you on Saturday 9th August Northwood Park from 13:00

From everyone in the Gaylife team x

Gaylife.Staffordshire-Stoke | GayLifeNStaffs | 0300 123 0970

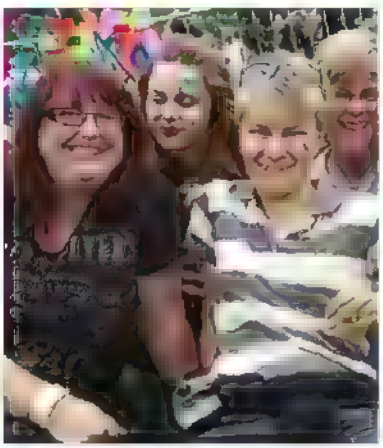
SUMMER OF PRIDE

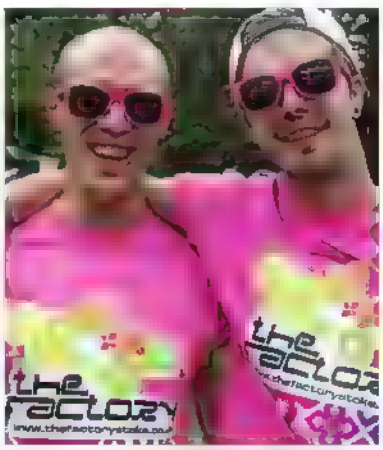
Stoke-on-Trent Pride goes 'supersized' for 2014!

Saturday 9 August

Northwood Park, Hanley

www.stokeontrentpride.org.uk





Over the past eight years, Stoke-on-Trent Pride has cemented its reputation as one of the 'must attend' festivals on the Midlands gay events calendar. And this year it's going to be bigger and better than ever before!

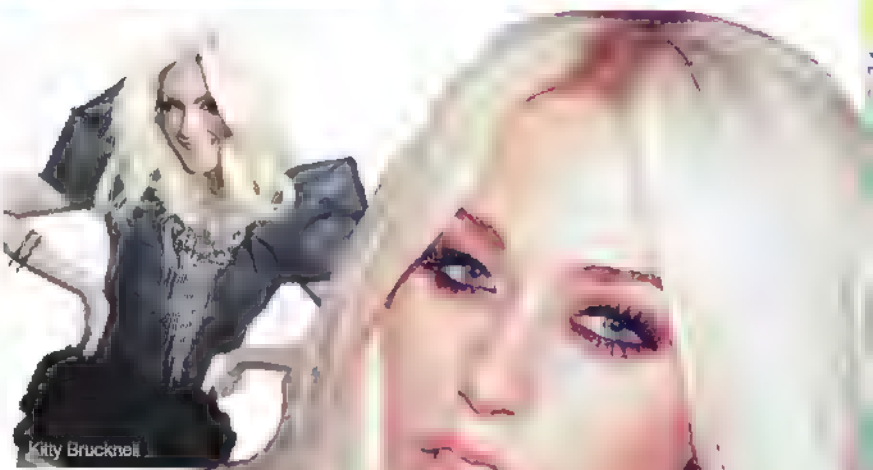
The festival, which is now run as a registered charity, returns to Northwood Park in Hanley next month, with organisers promising bigger stalls, bigger bars and bigger headline acts.

The 2014 celebration will see the reintroduction of a second stage. Headline acts so far announced include Big Brovas, Stolen Identity, Luke Greenhalgh, Rob Eagle, Ashleigh K, and X Factor favourites Amelia Lily and Kitty Brucknell.

There'll be a lot more entertainment at the event too, with stiltwalkers, fire-breathers, a funfair and numerous stalls all featuring. Activities on the day will range from five-a-side footy, a dog show and sports day activities right through to a timed drag race (which should be super fun!)

Stoke-on-Trent Pride is offering VIP access to the front of the main stage for £20. VIPs will also get priority bar service thrown in and a chance to have a meet-and-greet with the artists.

Stoke-on-Trent Pride takes place on Saturday 9 August at Northwood Park in Hanley. For more information, visit the festival's website at www.stokeontrentpride.org.uk.


Kitty Brucknell

Amelia Lily headline

SATURDAY 9TH AUGUST

STOKE ON TRENT PRIDE

NORTHWOOD PARK

HANLEY, ST1 6RA 12-7PM

SATURDAY AUGUST 9TH 12 - 7PM

VIP

THE EXCLUSIVE VIP TICKET

VIP WRISTBAND

VIP TOILETS FRONT OF STAGE ACCESS

FREE GLASS OF BUBBLY VIP BAR SERVICE

MEET & GREET WITH MAIN STAGE ACTS

WRISTBAND £20

MAIN STAGE

AMELIA LILY

BIG BROVAS / KITTY BRUCKNELL

STOLEN IDENTITY - LUKE [illegible] EAGLE - ASHLEIGH K

[illegible] FACTORY [illegible] [illegible] MUSICAL THEATRE

TICKETS: WWW.STOKEONTRENTPRIDE.ORG.UK

the factory

www.thefactorystoke.co.uk

THE FACTORY PRESENT

STOKE-ON-TRENT PRIDE OFFICIAL AFTER PARTY

SATURDAY 9 AUGUST

DOORS OPEN 7PM-4AM

WRISTBANDS ON SALE NOW

WRISTBANDS £3 IN ADVANCE - BUY ONLINE - £4 ON THE DAY

MANAGEMENT RESERVE THE RIGHT TO REFUSE ADMISSION AND TO CHANGE/CANCEL ADVERTISED ACTS/PROMOTIONS WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

2014 UK LGBT EVENTS

Annual LGBT Pride events in the UK mean two things. One, there's a celebration of all things LGBT happening; and two, summer is here! Yay!

Here's our extensive list of UK Pride events - from Cornwall in the South to Glasgow in the North. Whichever you choose to attend, we hope you have an awesome time!

July

Essex Pride
Sat 5 July
Central Park, Chelmsford
essexpride.org

Bristol Pride
Sat 12 July
College Green, Bristol
pridebristol.co.uk

Bourne Free Pride
Sat 12 July
Triangle Arena, Bournemouth
bournefree.co.uk

Sparkle In The Park
Sat 12 & Sun 13 July
Sackville Gardens
sparkle.org.uk

Newcastle Pride
Fri 18 July
Town Moor & Times Square
northern-pride.com

L Fest
Fri 18 - Mon 21 July
Uttoxeter Race Course, Staffs
lfest.co.uk

Glasgow Pride
Sat 19 July
King Street Car Park
prideglasgow.co.uk

Brighton Doggy Pride
Sun 20 July
Hove Recreation Ground
brighton-pride.org

Nottinghamshire Pride
Sat 26 July
Hove Recreation Ground
nottinghamshirepride.co.uk

August

Brighton Pride
Sat 1- 3 August
Preston Park
brighton-pride.org

Shrewsbury Pink Picnic
Sat 2 August
Quarry Park, Shrewsbury
lgbtshrewsbury.co.uk

Liverpool Pride
Sat 2 August
Pier Head, Liverpool
liverpoolpride.co.uk

Leeds Pride
Sun 3 August
Lower Briggate, Leeds
leedspride.com

Gay Family Pride
8 - 11 August
Barnswood Scout Camp
Staffordshire
gayfamilyweb.co.uk

Stoke Pride
Sat 9 August
Northwood Park
stokepride.org.uk

Swindon and Wiltshire Pride
Sat 9 August
Town Gardens, Quarry Rd
Swindon
swindonwiltshirepride.co.uk

Wakefield Pride
Sun 10 August
Warren Gate, Wakefield
wakefieldpride.org

Doncaster Pride
Sat 16 August
Civic Square, Waterdale
doncasterpride.co.uk

Cardiff Mardigras
Sat 16 August
Coopers field, Cardiff
cardiffmardigras.co.uk

Weston-Super-Mare Pride
Sat 16 August
Grove Park

Manchester Pride
Sat 23 August
Manchester
manchesterpride.com

Walsall Pride
Sat 23 August
Gallery Square
walsallpride.org

Cornwall Pride
Sat 23 August
Truro Lemon Quay
cornwallpride.com

Reading Pride
Sat 30 August
King Meadow Park, Reading
readingpride.co.uk

Leicester Pride
Sat 30 August
Victoria Park, Leicester
leicesterpride.com

September

Derby Pride
Sat 13 September
Bass Recreation Ground, Derby
derbyshirepride.co.uk

Sunderland Pride
Sun 28 September
Civic Centre
sunderlandpride.co.uk

Wolves Pride
Sat 27 September
Venue: Wolverhampton (tbc)
LGBTWolverhampton.org.uk

October

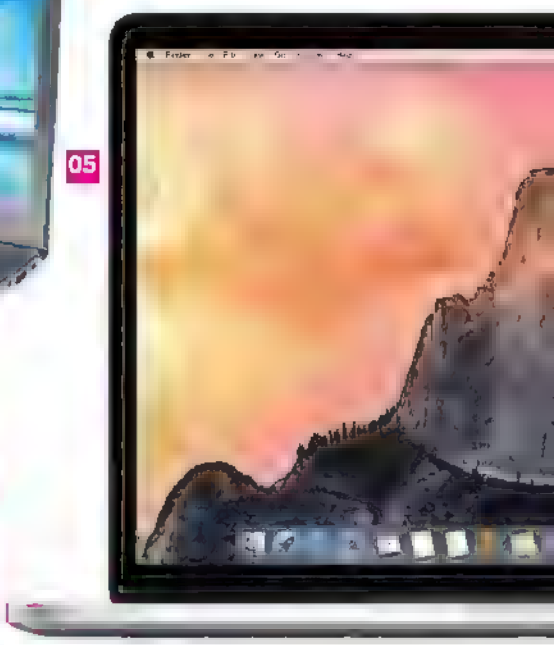
Chester Pride
Sat 4 October
Grosvenor Park
chesterpride.co.uk

Rainbow Film Festival
Fri 17 - Sun 19 October
Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury
rainbowfilmfestival.org.uk

November

Shout Festival
Thurs 13 - 16 Sun November
Various venues around Birmingham
www.shoutfestival.co.uk

WEST MIDLANDS ZONE
WISH EVERYONE A SAFE AND HAPPY PRIDE



GET AHEAD OF THE GAME WITH THE LATEST GADGETS

01 Powerbeats Wireless

Completely redesigned, Powerbeats² Wireless revolutionises the workout experience. The wireless earphone brings to life enhanced performance with its sweat-and-water-resistant design, 30ft Bluetooth connection, rechargeable battery, six-hour nonstop playback and Beats signature sound.

£169.95
www.beatsbydre.com

02 LG G3

Offering users a Quad HD display that supports an incredible 538ppi. The detail that the G3 delivers is as close to reality as you'll ever have seen with a smartphone. Neatly packed into a stylish metallic design, the LG G3 features an Advanced OIS+ camera that, with the help of Laser Auto Focus, dual LED flash and other superb camera features, captures excellent photos at a quality of 13MP.

From FREE
www.buymobiles.net

03 Apple iOS 8

iOS 8, the operating system that runs on the iPhone and iPad, just got better. Featuring hundreds of new features, this is a must-download when it hits in the Autumn. You can now sync all your photos between devices, quickly send video in messages, and never make a typo again with an advanced keyboard. Plus, family sharing, iCloud Drive, health tracking and so much more.

FREE
www.apple.com/uk

04 Samsung Chromebook 2

The new Chromebook 2 achieves simple perfection, starting with its premium design. The leather-like cover is richly textured, further upgrading its slim and sleek design. Its HD resolution screen, optimised video conferencing, and enhanced Exynos 5 Octa processor enable outstanding performance, especially with Wi-Fi speeds that are three times faster than before.

TBC
www.samsung.com

05 Apple OS X Yosemite

OS X Yosemite. Apple's latest incarnation of its popular operating system for Macs, offers loads of new features. It's been redesigned from the ground up, to help you work better. From continuity features through more powerful apps to Handover features, the system is designed to help integrate your iPad or iPhone into your workflow.

FREE
www.apple.com/uk

ADD COLOUR TO YOUR KITCHEN THIS SUMMER

Check out our selection of colourful electricals to brighten up your kitchen

01 **Beach / Green Retro Fridge Freezer**
Household favourite Servis has launched a colourful range of 1950s fridge freezers to celebrate the UK's love affair with retro styling in the home. Bringing a splash of fun and colour into the kitchen, the retro collection fuses vintage style with modern cooling technology.
£TBC
www.servis.co.uk

02 **Kenwood kMix Brights Toaster Blue**
kMix Brights Toaster in Blue is a cool and unique way to add a block of colour to the kitchen. This bright blue two-slice toaster boasts a simple and straightforward design with smooth, rounded edges and a vivid colour in a glossy SureGrip finish.
£TBC
www.redcandy.co.uk

03 **KitchenAid Artisan Mixer Tangerine**
The iconic KitchenAid Artisan Food Mixer, with its retro good looks, is the No 1 selling mixer today. Since 1919, the high quality of KitchenAid has attracted millions of householders and cooks.
£415
www.cotswoldtrading.com

04 **Kenwood kMix Brights Traditional Kettle Pink**
kMix Brights Traditional Kettle in Pink! This pink retro-style kettle features a classic design with modern features and a bright, colourful finish. Complete with detachable 360-degree base, a water level indicator in the back of the handle, and an illuminated power switch.
£59
www.redcandy.co.uk

05 **Servis Washer Dryer**
Packed with innovative features, the Servis Washer Dryer is the complete solution to help consumers save time, energy and money. With an impressive 9kg wash capacity and the ability to dry up to 6kg of items, it's ideal for chaotic family life. Available in white, silver, black or red.
£549
www.servis.co.uk

PRIVATE
STRUCTURE
underwear
9 Styles
18 Different Colours
From £19.99
Exclusively from
CLONEZONE
www.clonezone.co.uk
Manchester - 36 - 38 Sackville Street, M1 3WA
Birmingham - 84 Hurst Street, B5 4TD
Soho - 35 Old Compton Street, London W1D 5JX
Earls Court - 266 Old Brompton Road, London SW5 9HR
*EXCLUSIVE TO CLONEZONE UK

aussieBum Classic 1.5" Swim Trunk £15.00
www.aussiebum.com

With Summer finally here and many of you packing your suitcases to fly to sunnier parts of the world, it's time to get some brand new swimwear to flaunt your stuff on the beach! Here's a selection of some of our favourite styles that will help you turn heads whilst you're soaking up the rays...

HOTTEST SUMMER SWIMMERS

01 **N2N Nautique Trunk**

If you're looking to make a statement on the beach this summer there's nothing better to do it in than this striking and fitted swimwear from N2N

£19.99

www.n2nbodywear.com

02 **Andrew Christian Almost Naked Glide Bikini**

The Almost Naked Glide Bikini features an anatomically correct pouch with extra room in front... just where you need it. When you put them on, your package falls naturally into the super-soft snuggle pocket, to create a truly enjoyable and unique experience.

£35.00

www.andrewchristian.com

03 **Oller & Boiler Tuckernuck Shorts**

The Oller & Boiler Tuckernuck Shorts are best for those who enjoy looser fitting swimwear. Featuring a drawstring waist, with mesh lining for added comfort, and a rear pocket. Don't expect these shorts to turn many heads, but you'll be looking great while you're chilling out on the sun lounger

£16.00

www.prowler.co.uk

04 **ES Collection Akajima Navy Swim Trunk**

The ES Collection Akajima Navy Swim Trunk is a sports-fit swimming trunk featuring ES's very own pack-up boosting cup, which enhances the appearance of your package

£59.00

www.bangads.com

05 **ES Collection Kaiteriteri Swim Trunk**

The ES Collection Kaiteriteri Square Cut Navy Swim Trunk sits on the hips with a shaped hem like a retro gym short. This trunk features ES's very own pack-up boosting cup, which enhances the appearance of your package

£70.00

www.clonezone.co.uk

06 **ES Collection Matira Red Striped Swim Short**

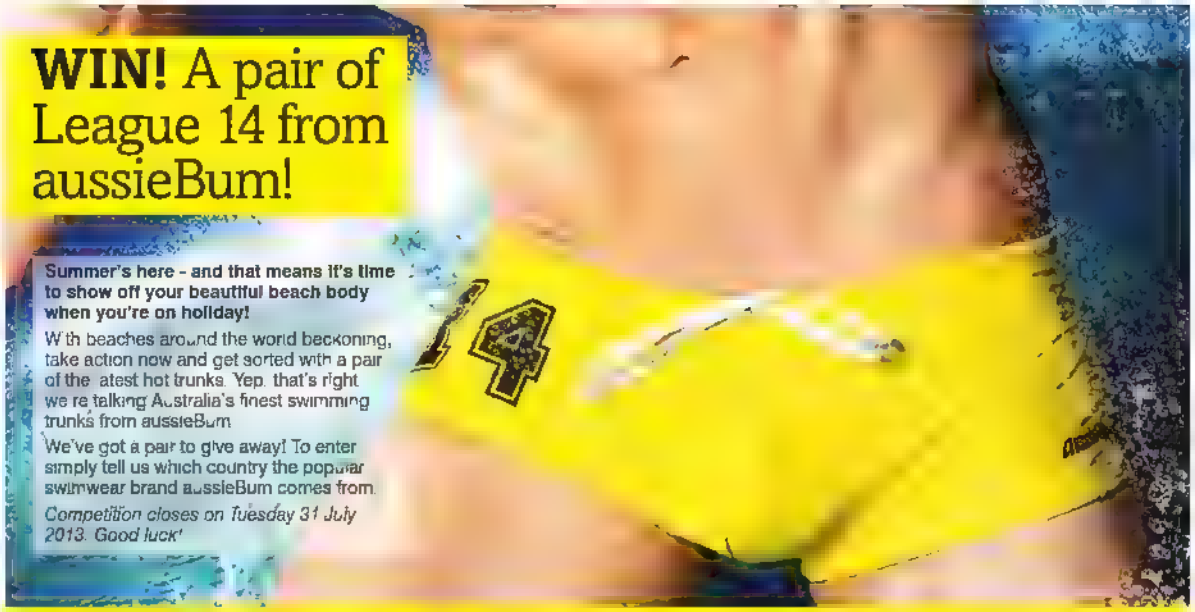
The ES Collection Matira Red Striped Swim Short are a shortie swim short cut low and square with an all-over red-and-white stripe, a white drawcord and elasticated waistband with side vents at the hem on the side seams

£63.00

www.bangads.com

WIN!

WIN! A pair of League 14 from aussieBum!



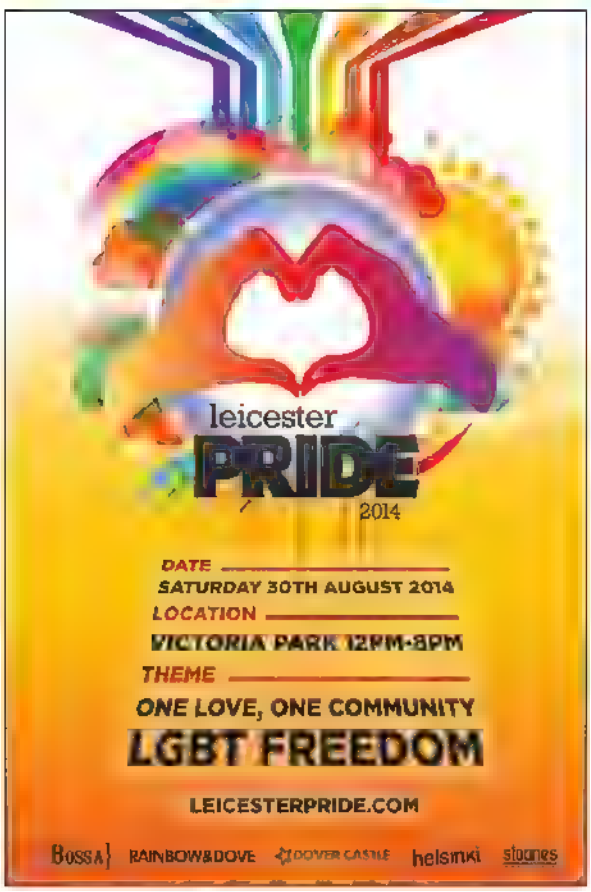
Summer's here - and that means it's time to show off your beautiful beach body when you're on holiday!

With beaches around the world beckoning, take action now and get sorted with a pair of the latest hot trunks. Yep, that's right we're talking Australia's finest swimming trunks from aussieBum.

We've got a pair to give away! To enter simply tell us which country the popular swimwear brand aussieBum comes from.

Competition closes on Tuesday 31 July 2013. Good luck!

Visit **www.midlandszone.co.uk** to enter!



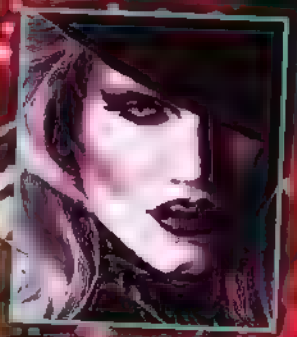
WHAT'S ON IN YOUR LOCAL GAY VENUES

SCENE

JULY 2014

BRITAIN'S GOT TALENT STAR

LA VOIX HITS THE MIDLANDS!



SHARON NEEDLES
brings Drag Race to Birmingham

Inside...

BRUM BEACH PARTIES
All the hot summer beach parties you need to be ready

DENISE PEARSON
The '80s superstar heads to Eden Bar to help celebrate its 40th

CABARET FUN
There's plenty of Midlands cabaret to keep you entertained in July!

EVERY MONDAY

Fabulous

THE BIGGEST GAY MONDAY NIGHT IN THE MIDLANDS!

MONDAY 7 JULY
VICKY JACKSON
AS LADY GA GA

FREE ENTRY
B4 11PM

DRINKS FROM £1

9PM-3AM!

C:21

MONDAY 4 AUGUST
GLITTER LIPS

18-21 ABBEY FOREGATE, SHREWSBURY, SHROPSHIRE SY2 6AE. TEL: 01743 271621 WWW.C21SHREWSBURY.CO.UK

VICKY JACKSON

Back once again at popular Shrewsbury nightclub C:21, Vicky Jackson is this month taking the stage with a fantastic tribute to Lady Gaga.

The folks of Shrewsbury always lap up Vicky's performances, so if you've not managed to see one of her shows, pop down on Monday 7 July for a night of great entertainment. There are cheap drinks too, so it definitely won't break the bank!

2-FOR-1 COCKTAILS

Just because the weekend s ended, it doesn't mean you can't pop out and enjoy yourself after work. Head to Birmingham's Loft Lounge for 2-for-1 cocktails all day! There's a great selection, ensuring there s something for everyone.

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS Sunday to Friday All day & night Wind down after work with a cocktail or two
The Loft Lounge

2 FOR £10 Monday to Friday 12-6pm. Delicious new menu.
Sidewalk

MIKISTRY OF POUND with Dj Mike Emery from 9pm Selected drinks £1 Open until 2am.
Missing Bar

PLAY YOUR CARDS RIGHT

Take a trip to The Village Inn in Birmingham for a night of fun and games with Mrs Mills and DJ Craig
Good old-fashioned Play Your Cards Right takes place every Monday, with some great prizes to be won!

PLAY YOUR CARDS RIGHT with Mrs Mills and DJ Craig. Cash prizes and free drinks. Happy Hour 12noon-10pm.
The Village Inn

POUNDED Come and get Pounded from 6pm onwards

£1 on selected spirits £1.50 Jagerbomb / Carling / Strongbow / Sambucca
Sidewalk

£2 entry drinks from £2 various DJs
Nightingale Club

MONDAY MADNESS drink offers with D Happy Hour until 2am
Bar Jester

OUTSKIRTS 1st & 3rd M
Equator Bar

FABULOUS - *Mon 7 July* - Cabaret with Vicky Jackson as Lady Gaga. Drinks from just £1
C:21, Shrewsbury

CHILL NIGHT with Karaok
Three Furnaces, Telford

CHILL OUT NIGHT with Free Pool and cheap drinks, with D
The White Hart, Wolverhampton

DENTED 9p Downstairs with DJ Dest
The Factory, Stoke on Trent

THE MONDAY CLUB 9pm-5am Student night. Everything is Edw
Gorgeous, Wolverhampton

STUDENT NIGHT Free admi mid
Pink, Stoke on Trent

2 TILL 2 Open from 2am for a quiet drink friendly atm
The Boston, Northampton

DISCO 7pm-midnigh
New Foresters, Nottingham

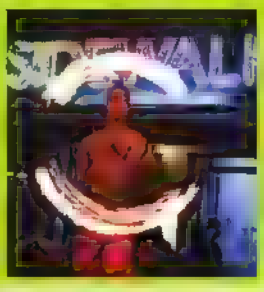
TUESDAY 1 8 15 22 29 JULY

TWO MEALS FOR A TENNER

If you're stuck for meal ideas or you've got no food in the house, pop into Birmingham's Sidewalk and take advantage of their cracking 'two meals for a tenner' offer.

Sidewalk offers a great menu, including burgers, paninis and steaks. And if you're a bit more health-concious, you can even enjoy a freshly made salad.

Pop in, grab a seat and take a look at the fantastic menu!



2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS - Sunday to Friday All day & night Wind down after work with a cocktail or two.
THE LOFT LOUNGE

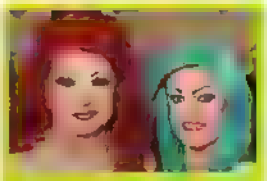
2 FOR £10 Monday to Friday 12 6pm. Delicious new menu.
SIDEWALK

MIS-SING KARAOKE With your host, James Party starts at 9pm till late
MISSING BAR

DJ JAMES

Every Tuesday sees Birmingham's Missing Bar hosting a night of karaoke. Join DJ James from 9pm till late and blast out some of your favourite songs over the microphone! Whether you can sing or not, it's always good for a laugh!

TACKY TUESDAYS
with Charlotte and Miss Penny



TUESDAYS GET TACKY

Miss Penny and Charlotte the Harlotte are on hand every Tuesday at The Village Inn with a night of tacky fun. Join them to win a host of great prizes - from free drinks behind the bar to free admission to The Nightingale. They'll even belt out a song or two for you!

Songs, Games & Prizes. Happy Hour 12noon-10pm
THE VILLAGE INN

TUNE UP TUESDAY Fun with Baby G Happy Hour until
BAR JESTER

CAMP QUIZ With free buffet Quiz
DOVER CASTLE, LEICESTER

THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

VELVET, WORCESTER

FLAUNT

BREWERY TAP, WORCESTER

MISS DOLLY MIXTURES

THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON

STUDENT PARTY

THE LION BAR & CLUB, WALSALL

2 TILL 2
THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

CHILL OUT NIGHT Free
midnight
NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM

GAMES NIGHT
DOVER CASTLE, LEICESTER

2 9 16 23 30 JULY

BIRMINGHAM

Rather than head ng out for a pint or a double vodka and Coke, why not opt for a cocktail? How about two? Because Sidewalk in Birmingham are offering two gorgeous cocktails for the price of one from their new menu!

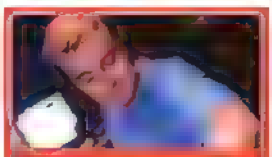
2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS Shake your tail feathers at Sidewalks new 2 for 1 cocktail menu.
SIDEWALK

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS - Sunday to Friday All day & night Wind down after work with a cocktail or two.
THE LOFT LOUNGE

2 GOOD 2 MISS Drinks from just £2 with DJ Mike Emery.
MISSING BAR

KARAOKE with Charlotte the Harlotte and DJ Deano Free Shots for all participants Happy Hour 12noon-8pm.
THE VILLAGE INN

MIDWEEK MAYHEM Free Pool



AT MISSING!

Missing Bar in Birmingham certainly knows how to throw an awesome party, regardless of which day of the week it is! Pop in for a night of top fun, great tunes and cheap drinks in the company of DJ Mike Emery and the rest of the venue's team

Open 7-11pm
THE FOX

WACKY WEDNESDAYS Hosted by Hallie James with DJ Craig Happy Hour until 2am Open 10pm-late
BAR JESTER

WEDNESDAYS GET

Pop on down to Birmingham's Bar Jester every Wednesday for a Wacky night out with Hallie James and DJ Craig!

WEDNESDAY LINE Line Dancing
THE WELLINGTON

WEST MIDLANDS

KY KELLY
THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON

STUDENT CLUB NIGHT
THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

EAST MIDLANDS

GAMES NIGHT Free Pool
NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM

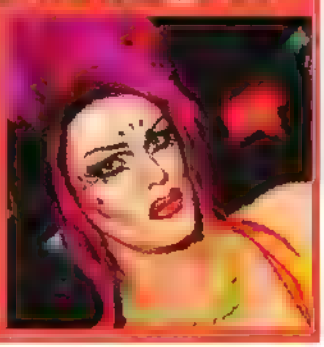
KARAOKE
THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

OUT
NG1, NOTTINGHAM

GRAB THE MIC with Charlotte the Harlotte at The Village Inn

If you think you've got a singing voice to rival Beyonce, Ellie Goulding or Gary Barlow, then pop along to Birmingham's Village Inn and show it off to Charlotte the Harlotte and DJ Deano.

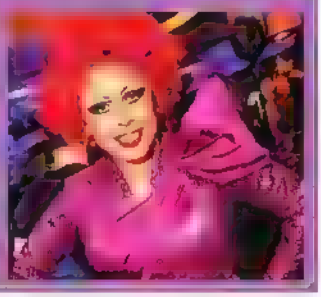
Whilst you may not walk away with a multi-million pound recording contract with Simon Cowell, you can walk away with a sense of pride - well, or embarrassment, depending on how you've done!



Eden Bar hits Brum with LA VOIX

Britain's Got Talent semi-finalist La Voix heads back to Birmingham this month with not one, but two shows at popular gay venue Eden!

Sadly, she didn't quite make it through to the finals of the hit ITV1 talent show - but that means we can keep her all to ourselves here in the Midlands! Catch her live on stage on Thursday 10 and Thurs 24 July.



BIRMINGHAM

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS - Sunday to Friday All day & night Wind down after work with a cocktail or two
The Loft Lounge

2 FOR £10 Monday to Friday 12 6pm Delicious new menu
Sidewalk

I ♥ THE 90S with Du Dan Open from 6pm
Eden Bar

BOMBZAI £1 20 Bombs 10 to choose from Selected drinks from £1 50 DJ Mykee taking you through to the early hours
Missing Bar

DJ DEANO On the decks. Happy Hour 12noon-2am.
The Village Inn

DROP THE BOMB start of your weekend £1 50 on all bombs (excluding the Gutterbomb) with our resident Du Rowan
Sidewalk

LA VOIX - *Thurs 10/24 July* - Live on stage alternate Thursdays Cocktails & Cabaret
Eden Bar

MARTY'S MADHOUSE

Getting you warmed up for the weekend, Marty takes to the stage at The Village Inn, Birmingham, for a night of songs, games and, of course, cheap drinks - with a happy hour until 2am! There's music from DJ Deano too!

MARTY'S MADHOUSE Songs Games and Happy Hour until 2am With Miss Marty and Du Deano
The Village Inn

POUNDED £5 entry Drinks from a £1 DJ Corey playing chart dance and urban on Ground Floor Miss Marty and Du Craig with all the pop and cheese you could ask for on the middle floor
Nightingale Club

GIRL THING Open 7 ate Drin[illegible] £1
The Fox

PARTY POP Popta[illegible]
Bar Jester

THE URBAN COLLECTION Br[illegible] new urban night Every T[illegible]
Club DV8

WEST MIDLANDS

CAMP KARAOKE and cabaret with
Three Furnaces, Telford

GET OUT with DJ T[illegible]
The Bell, Stourbridge

RETRO
The White Hart, Wolverhampton

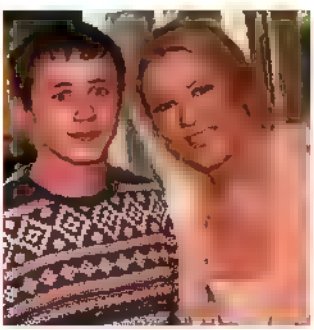
TASTE THE RAINBOW
The Factory, Stoke on Trent

EAST MIDLANDS

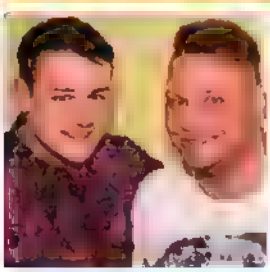
2 TILL 2 Open from 2p[illegible]
The Boston, Northampton

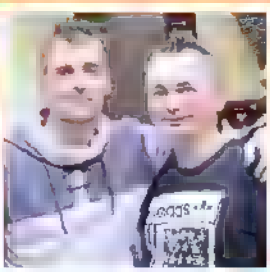
KARAOKE & DISCO 7pm
New Foresters, Nottingham

Wolves latest venue: **The Bond Street Tavern**



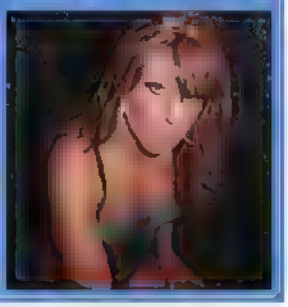
There's a new gay venue in Wolverhampton.
The Bond Street Tavern (on Bond Street no surprises there, eh?) was previously known as The Greyhound. The venue's just been given a few thousand pounds-worth of refurb and is now modern, bright and airy The Tavern serves drinks and food, and will be providing top entertainment each and every week. Pop in and take a look around!





LIFE IS A CABARET at Birmingham's Village Inn

If you're out on a Friday night and looking for some great entertainment, then look no further than Birmingham's award-winning Village Inn. July sees four great acts take to the stage. Kicking off the month's line-up is Glitter Lips on Friday 4 July. Next up, on Friday the 11th, is the brilliant Lola Lasagne, with Drag With No Name giving it her all on the 18th. Wrapping things up is the brilliant Sandra, on Friday the 25th.



BIRMINGHAM

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS - Sunday to Friday. All day & night. Wind down after work with a cocktail or two
The Loft Lounge

2 FOR £10 Monday to Friday 12 6pm. Delicious new men
Sidewalk

ALL DAY EVERY DAY PRICES D Parm takes over the weekend by playing the best of club classics house, R&B and all your favourites. Enjoy all day every day prices too!
Sidewalk

Big Gay Friday

Missing Bar in Birmingham is on a mission to turn Friday night into the gayest night in the city. Join DJ James for Big Gay Fridays, when he'll be playing party anthems through till the early hours. It's great fun, so why not pop by?

BIG GAY FRIDAY - Party anthems all night long with Missing's D James. Open unt the early hours
Missing Bar

DISCO & KARAOKE with DJ Nikki
Eden Bar

FREAKY FRIDAY with DJ Lotty. Big name cabaret at midnight. Open unt 6am. ***Fri 4 July*** Glitter Lips ***Fri 11 July*** Lola Lasagne ***Fri 18th*** Drag With No Name ***Fri 25 July*** Sandra. Happy Hour 12noon 8pm
The Village Inn

DJ Corey

Kickstart your weekend with a trip to the Nightingale in Birmingham to enjoy an evening of clubbing with DJ Corey. She'll be playing the biggest anthems and best floor-fillers throughout the night. Plus, there are drinks from just £2!

INFUSION Free Entry. Absolute Anthems and Floor F llers with D Corey. Drinks from £2. Admission £2
Nightingale Club

KICK START Kick start the week end from 9pm til the early hours. Hosted by James
Missing Bar

L8R With Charlotte the Harlotte. Open unt 6am every Friday
The Village Inn

LIP GLOSS - ***Fri 4 July*** - with host Trisha. Every first Friday of the month. A night for the Trans community (friends welcome). 9pm-2am. £3 admission.
Eden Bar

Midsbears

Friday 18 July sees the monthly Midsbears meet-up take place at Birmingham's Eden Bar. If you've not been before, it's a monthly social group for Bears and their admirers. It's a great night out too, so be sure to pop along!

MIDSBEARS - ***Fri 18 July*** - Monthly meet up and social group for Bears and Admirers
Eden Bar

SING STAR SUPERSTAR with D Nikki every Friday - your chance to win cash!
Eden Bar

VINTAGE FRIDAYS a night of soul funk, rock, motown, Northern Soul and all the classic favourites
The Loft Lounge

XXL PRE-BAR - ***Fri 18 July*** - Official pre-bar for XXL. Monthly meet up for the Midlands Bears
Eden Bar

XXL - ***Fri 18 July*** - Men only night with D Christian M. Early Bear offers until 11pm. Every 3rd Friday of each month
The Core Club

HALLOWEEN MEGA

BRINGS THE BOYS TO THE ARGENTINE BRUN

Every third Friday of the month (Friday 18 July) sees Britain's biggest men-only party head to Birmingham. Hosted at the Core Club, it's a night that brings together the men of the Midlands and beyond. Expect a lot of bare bodies and great music!
THE CORE CLUB, BIRMINGHAM

Club DV8

FUNK IT UP

Club Chic

KARAOKE Come and ha
The Fox

RETRO FRIDAY Retro tunes wi D Matt. Happy Hour until 2an Open 9pm
Bar Jester

SO IT GOES *Fri 25* sh [Jack & MC Neat
Club DV8

WEST MIDLANDS

TV PARTY NIGHT A Men's Night for TVs, Cross Dressers and Admirers. Every Friday night at
The Greenhouse, Darlaston

BACK 2 BACK KARAOKE with D hawn and D Moses. 8pm-4am
The White Hart, Wolverhampton

CLUB NIGHT
The Three Furnaces, Telford

CLUB FRIDAY with D Z
The Lion, Walsall

FRIDAY SOCIAL wi [&
The Bell, Stourbridge

[FEST

Uttoxeter Racecourse, Staffordshire

LUSH & YOLO! 1st Fri month [resident [
Gorgeous Club, Wolverhampton

PARTY BEAST

Windows, Coventry

START THE WEEKEND
n before 11pm

Pink, Stoke on Trent

TFI FRIDAY

Brewery Tap, Worcester

VENOM Foxy [pstairs from 11pm
The Factory, Stoke-on-Trent

EAST MIDLANDS

CABARET NIGHT every Fri
Dover Castle, Leicester

CLUB NIGHT

Helsinki, Leicester

2nd 3rd & 4th Fri
Curzons, Derby

PINK POUNDER E [
The Boston, Northampton

VALUE FRIDAY D
New Foresters, Nottingham

THE WEEKEND STARTS HERE

NG1, Nottingham

WIG OUT New monthly
Sloanes, Leicester

GET YOUR LIP GLOSS ON at Birmingham's Eden Bar

Lip Gloss, hosted on the first Friday of the month (Fri 4 July) at popular community venue Eden Bar in Birmingham, is a great night out for the trans* community. So if you're trans, a friend, an admirer, or you just want a great night out, this is the event for you! Featuring some brilliant entertainment, Lip Gloss costs just £3 to get in and runs from 9pm through until 2am. Pop along, say hi and make some new friends!

XXL LONDON

WEDNESDAYS 10PM - 3AM
SATURDAYS 10PM - 8AM
PULSE
No.1 INVICTA PLACE SE1 9UF

WWW.XXL-LONDON.COM

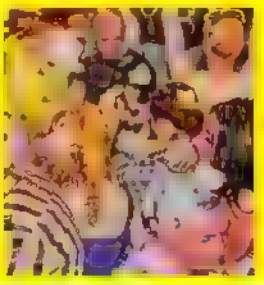
BIRMINGHAM

3RD FRIDAY EVERY MONTH
9PM - 3AM
THE CORE
135 SHERLOCK ST. BIRMINGHAM

FACEBOOK.COM/XXLLONDON

LIFE'S A BEACH in Birmingham's gay village!

Saturday 26 July offers plenty of things to see and do in Birmingham's gay village - including numerous beach parties in various venues.
Sidewalk is hosting a male and female wet t-shirt competition; Missing are doing £2.50 cocktails. Over at the Nightingale, there's a massive foam party to get stuck into. And the best bit? They all encourage you to turn up in your [illegible]!
[illegible]



BIRMINGHAM

BACK TO THE '80S WITH DJ DAN

If you're not into the latest tunes, or you just fancy something a bit different, then pop into Birmingham's Eden Bar from 2am, where DJ Dan takes the music back to the 1980s. Not only that, but there are cheap drinks all night too!
[illegible]

80S HITS with Dj Dan from 2am. It's back to the 80s with cheap drink promotions
Eden Bar

THE ATTIC Available for hire. Call the venue for more info. 0121 622 4256
[illegible]

BACK TO THE 80S 2am - 4am
Eden Bar

BAYWATCH PARTY - *Sat 26 July* - Male & Female wet T-Shirt competition with prizes
Sidewalk

BEACH PARTY - *Sat 26 July* - with £2.50 cocktails. Join DJs Mykee and Nikk for a night of fun - don't forget wear your swimwear
Missing Bar

BEARBRUM - *Sat 5 July* - Free food. With DJ Yogi. In association with Mids Bears. Sports wear theme
Eden Bar

BIG GAY NIGHT OUT - *Sat 26 July* - Beach & Foam Party. Maspalomas Pride Reunion Party. Beach outfit competition. Travel, admission and 2 free drinks £15. Coaches from Coventry, Derby, Leicester, Manchester, Northampton, Nottingham, Shrewsbury & Telford and Stoke on Trent
Nightingale Club

BIG SATURDAY NIGHT OUT Over 2 floors. 3 DJs. Open til 8am. With DJ Lotty & DJ Richard Moon. With DJ Tonie in The Village Underground
The Village Inn

BIG SATURGAY NIGHT OUT Every Saturday with loads of drinks promotions
Nightingale Club

DENISE PEARSON HEADS TO BRUM

'80s superstar Denise Pearson, from 5 Star, is set to appear at Birmingham's Eden Bar as part of co-owner Cal's 40th birthday celebrations. If you're a fan of Denise's - or you just want to wish Cal a happy birthday - pop in on Saturday 26 July!
[illegible]

CAL'S 40TH BIRTHDAY - *Sat 26 July* - It's Cal's (Eden) 40th birthday party. Live on stage Denise Pearson (5 Star)
Eden Bar

CULT Bringing dirty house back home. Top Floor from 10pm
Nightingale Club

KARAOKE & COCKTAILS In The Attic, plus music from across the decades
Missing

L8R With Charlotte the Harlotte. Open until 8am every Saturday
The Village Inn

SATURDAY SESSIONS WITH DJ SIMON BAKER

Join DJ Simon Baker and the rest of the Loft Lounge team for a night of great tunes to get you and your friends geared up for some spectacular fun in Birmingham's gay village. Pop in from 8pm and enjoy the summer nights in style!
[illegible]

SATURS-FACTION Welcome in the weekend with resident DJ, playing the best of everything
Sidewalk

SATURDAY SESSIONS With DJ Simon Baker from 8pm
The Loft Lounge

THE UK'S DRAG RACE - *Sat 5 July* - With Guest DJ Sharon Needles. Huge £1000 cash prize on the night
Nightingale Club

TOUCH MY BRUM - *Sat 19 July* - Birmingham Bulls rugby tournament weekend. With Queens Of Pop. For info visit touchmybrum.co.uk
Eden Bar

WE <3 SATURDAYS with DJ Mykee playing the best party tunes. Featuring Twiggy and sexy Shane on his stilts. Open until 4am.
Missing Bar

[illegible]
Saturday
Club Chic

[illegible]
Equator Bar

DJ PARTY NIGHT Open from 3pm
The Fox

#JUST SAYING with DJ Matt. Happy H[illegible] every Sat
Bar Jester

KARAOKE Ev[illegible]
The Wellington

WEST MIDLANDS

L FEST - *Sat 18 July* - Lesbian music, arts & comedy festival
Uttoxeter Racecourse, Staffordshire

THE ANTIDOTE Divina De Campo, from RPDR [illegible] Dyson, plus a [illegible]
The Factory, Stoke on Trent

[illegible]
The Lion, Walsall

CAMP & SLAG 9pm-6am. Drin[illegible] im £1.50 until midnight. DJ. Phr[illegible]
Gorgeous Wolverhampton

CLUB NIGHT Drink promos unt[illegible] 9.45. Free entry before 10pm
The Three Furnaces, Telford

FLOORFILLERS wi[illegible] Smith
Rainbows, Coventry

INCLUSION with big nam[illegible] Birmingham & UK DJs eve[illegible]
The Bell, Stourbridge

LIVE CABARET W[illegible] 2.30a[illegible]
The White Hart, Wolverhampton

NOT TO MISS F[illegible] before 1pm. Tany H[illegible]
Pink, Stoke on Trent

EAST MIDLANDS

[illegible]
[illegible]pm til 6am. Free entry b[illegible] 1pm. £3 before 1am and £5 aft[illegible]
The Boston, Northampton

[illegible]
6.30am. 3 DJs. With DJ Ciara. Fre[illegible]
NG1, Nottingham

CLUB NIGHT Wit[illegible] midnight. £[illegible]
Helsinki, Leicester

DISCO [illegible]
New Foresters, Nottingham

[illegible]
midnight
Curzons, Derby

[illegible]
Nottingham City Centre

SHARON NEEDLES brings Drag Race fun to Birmingham

American drag queen and recording artist Sharon Needles is heading to Birmingham's Nightingale Club on Saturday 5 July for the venue's very own RuPaul's Drag Race-inspired event. If you're a wannabe drag superstar, then pop along to the club and you'll be in with a chance of winning a massive £1,000 cash prize.

Remember your heels, be sassy, be fierce, and you should do pretty well!
[illegible]

Missing
SATURDAY
26 JULY 2014
£2.50
COCKTAILS
BEACH
PARTY
DJ MYKEE
& DJ NIKKI

MRS MILLS [illegible] Sunday night cabaret

If you've not had enough fun and games over the weekend, then this is your chance to have some more! Pop down to The Village Inn in Brum for a laugh every Sunday evening - and boy, do they have a great line-up sorted for you this month! Kicking off proceedings is Mrs Mills (Sun 6). Then it's Marty Smith (Sun 13), Scarlett Tiara (Sun 20) and Champagne Shirley (Sun 27). Who doesn't love a bit of cabaret, eh?

BIRMINGHAM

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS Sunday to Friday. All day & night. Wind down after work with a cocktail or two.
THE LOFT LOUNGE

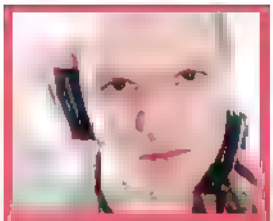
2 FOR £10 New menu. Roast Dinner served every Sunday from 1pm.
SIDEWALK

DISCO & KARAOKE with DJ Nikki. Every Sunday.
EDEN BAR

MISSING PRESENTS Cabaret every Sunday hosted by one of their fabulous drag queens
MISSING BAR

SUNDAY BREAKFAST The perfect hangover cure from 9am. Just £7.95. Carvery from 12noon for just £9.95
THE LOFT LOUNGE

SUNDAY CABARET - *Sun 6 July* Mrs Mills *Sun 13 July* Miss Marty *Sun 20 July* Scarlett Tiara *Sun 27 July* Champagne Shirley.
THE VILLAGE INN



SUNDAY SESSIONS WITH DJ DEANO

After the cabaret at the Village Inn, stick around and join DJ Deano for a night of great music to end your weekend with a big bang! He'll be playing the biggest and best hits, so expect the dancefloor to be packed!

SUNDAY SESSION with Mrs Mills and DJ Deano. Plus Bingo with Mrs Mills from 7pm. Happy Hour 12noon-10pm.
THE VILLAGE INN

SUNDAY ROASTS

If you went out on Saturday night and you're suffering a bit, then pop into Sidewalk for a cheeky roast dinner from 1pm. There's a selection of meat roasts available, and it all costs just £6.95! It's one of Zone's favourite hangover cures!

SUPER SUNDAY DINNER served from 1pm. Cure that hangover and choose from a variety of meats with all the best bits of a roast for only £6.95
SIDEWALK

CHILLAX Look out for the special Sunday promotions. Open 3pm.
THE FOX

FLASHBACK Sun 20 July. Turning [illegible]
BAR JESTER

[illegible] BIRTHDAY IS PAINTING [illegible] E[illegible]
BAR JESTER

THREE COURSE LUNCH only £7.50
THE WELLINGTON

WEST MIDLANDS

CHILL OUT After th[illegible]
RAINBOWS, COVENTRY

CLUB SUNDAY Fr[illegible] selected 2 for 1 [illegible]
LION BAR & CLUB, WALSALL

MARTY'S PARTY 9pm-4a[illegible] & Games. Karaoke. Prizes a[illegible] mind mayhem. Drinks fr[illegible].
GORGEOUS, WOLVERHAMPTON

QUEENS OF DRAG [illegible] [illegible] relation for [illegible] Plus Ka[illegible]
THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON

RANDOM PARTY NIGHT Op[illegible]
THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

SHABBA SUNDAY [illegible] E[illegible]
THE FACTORY, STOKE ON TRENT

SUMMER SUNDAYS A[illegible] E[illegible] tables o[illegible] F[illegible]
THE LION BAR & CLUB, WALSALL

SUNDAY ROAST [illegible]
THE WHITE HART, [illegible]

EAST MIDLANDS

BRUNCH CLUB Brunch for £[illegible] unlimited soft drinks, midday spri[illegible].
RAINBOW & DOVE, LEICESTER

KARAOKE & DISCO
NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM

KARAOKE WITH JOEYOKE 2am. £6 cocktail pitc[illegible]
THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

DJ NIKKI [illegible] Disco and Karaoke in Birmingham

Pop along to Eden bar in Birmingham every Sunday for a night of karaoke and disco.

If you think you've got the voice of an angel, then give it a go! They won't judge you if you're awful - we promise!

It's a great way to end the weekend and gear yourself up for the dreaded return to work on a Monday morning!

Fabulous fun with Sandra at Shrewsbury's C:21

At the beginning of last month, ever-popular drag queen Sandra, The Whore of Hampstead Heath, took to the stage at Shrewsbury's C:21 bar and nightclub. An evening of top-quality hilarity ensued.

The weekly Monday gay night then continued till the early hours, with DJs Mart and Co n performing back-to-back, play ng the biggest h ts and keep ng the dancefloor packed a.l n ght

The friendly bar team at C 21 kept the beers flowing too, with drinks start ng at just £1 all n ght

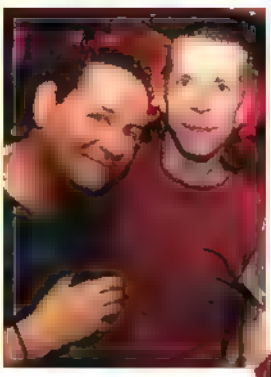
It was clear to see that people were having one hel uva great n ght out in Shrewsbury!

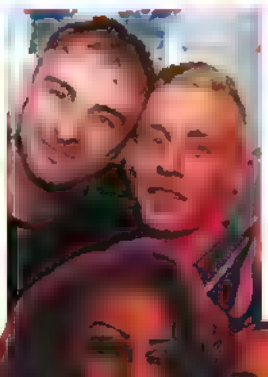
www.c21shrewsbury.co.uk

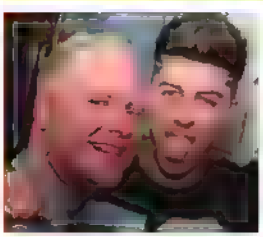
facebook

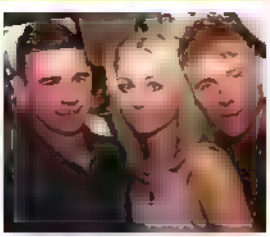
facebook.com/midlandszone.co.uk

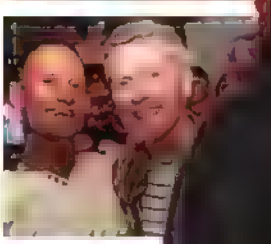
Keeping the drinks flowing: C:21's bar team











Sandra with C:21 boss Grant Lees

Pictures by Ryan Humphreys

LET US ENTE

The Village Inn :: BIRMINGHAM'S No.1

Freaky Fridays

NOW OPEN TILL

6AM

Friday 04

Glitter Lips

Friday 25

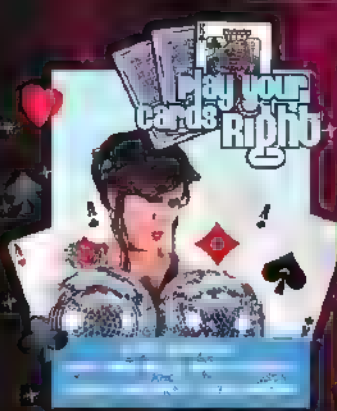
Sandra

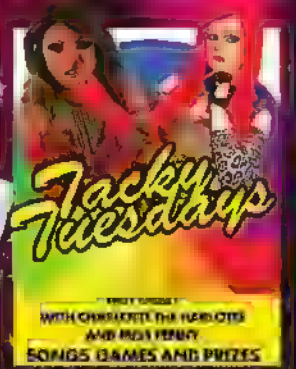
Friday 11

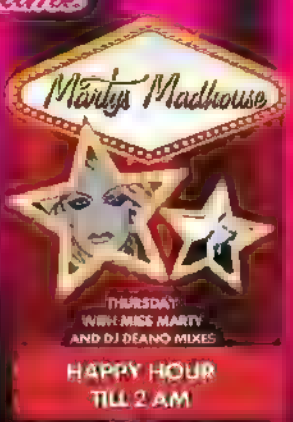
Lola Lasagne

Friday 18

Drag with no name







3 CHANCES TO WIN

The Village Inn

CASH JACKPOTS

Jacky Tuesdays

HAPPY HOUR

12PM - 10PM : SUN - WEDNESDAY

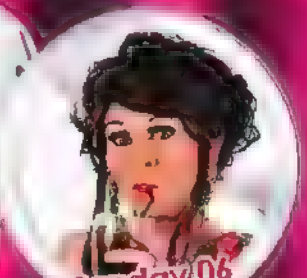
12PM - 2PM : THURSDAY NIGHT

12PM - 8PM: FRIDAY NIGHT

ERTAIN YOU In July

CABARET VENUE AS VOTED BY YOU!

Sunday Cabaret

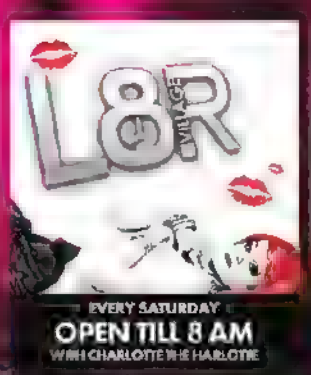


Sunday 06
Mrs Mills

Sunday 27
Champagne Shirley

Sunday 13
Miss Manty

Sunday 20
Scarlett Tiana



VILLAGE INN BIRMINGHAM

OPEN 7 DAYS
A WEEK :
12 PM - TILL LATE

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK
WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/VILLAGEINNBIRMINGHAM

drinkaware.co.uk

The Village Inn

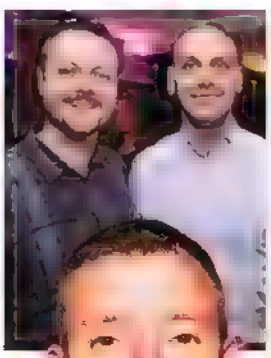
0121 622 4742
152 HURST STREET, BIRMINGHAM, B5 6RY
WWW.VILLAGEBIRMINGHAM.CO.UK

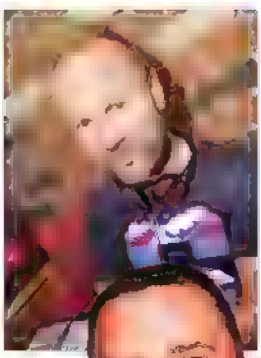
Boys will be boys at Birmingham's **Eden Bar**

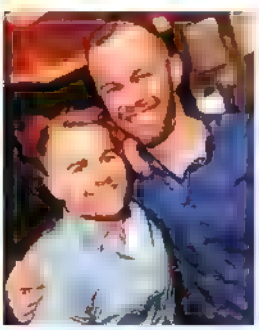
Birmingham bar Eden has, for many years, taken away the Best Bar For Men award at the Midlands Zone Readers' Awards. And not without good reason...

The bar attracts a massive cross-section of fellas (women are welcome too, of course) from bears to cubs and otters to twinks - and it's all thanks to the various community groups who meet up at the venue. From BearBrum and MidsBears to the official XXL pre-bar, there's always a reason for the boys to swing by for a pint.

So why not pop in on your next night out, sample the friendly atmosphere, and say a big hello to Eden bosses Garry and Ca.







Pictures by **Laura Byrne**

EDEN THIS MONTH

Open from 2pm every day

eden JULY 116 Sherlock Street Birmingham B5 6NB 0121 622 1953 www.theedenbar.co.uk

FRI 4th
Liz Gloss
COMMUNITY

SAT 5th
BEAR BRUM

FRI 18th
MidsBears

BIRMINGHAM BULLS
TOUCH MY BRUM RUGBY
TOURNAMENT WEEKEND
touchmybrum.com
for more info
on the tournament

SAT 19TH
Queens Of Pop

BRITAIN'S GOT TALENT
SEMI-FINALIST
La Voix

EVERY OTHER THURS
JULY 10TH
JULY 24TH
AUG 7TH

COCKTAILS
& CABARET
exclusive to eden

SAT 26TH JULY
DENISE PEARSON
FROM 80s 5 STAR
It's Cal's 40th Birthday Party

EVERY THURS | EVERY FRI & SUN | EVERY SAT

90s HITS WITH DJ DAN
GREAT ATMOSPHERE WITH HAPPY HOUR PRICES FROM 9pm

KARAOKE & DISCO DJ NIKKI
COME ALONG & SING WITH A FRIENDLY REGULAR CROWD

80s HITS WITH DJ DAN
POP & DANCE TILL 2 80s FROM 2-4 AM & CRAZY DRINK PRICES

GET YOUR FREE COPY DELIVERED TO YOUR DOOR EVERY MONTH

...you just pay for the postage and packing!

Yes, we know you're wondering what the catch is
Well, there isn't one!
We've ripped up our subscription rates so that more of you can get the No 1 gay magazine in the Midlands delivered direct to your front door every month

And at just £2 an issue to cover the postage and packing there's never been a better time to get it delivered!

It's easy - just call our Subscription Hotline on 01743 281714

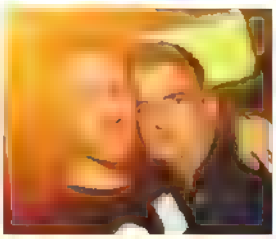
Simply pay the postage and packing cost of £2 per issue by debit or credit card!

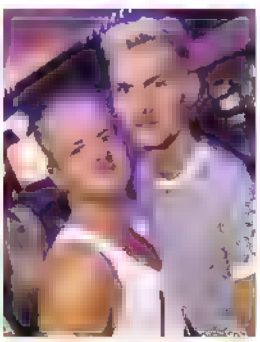
Missing Bar: Almost too hot to handle!

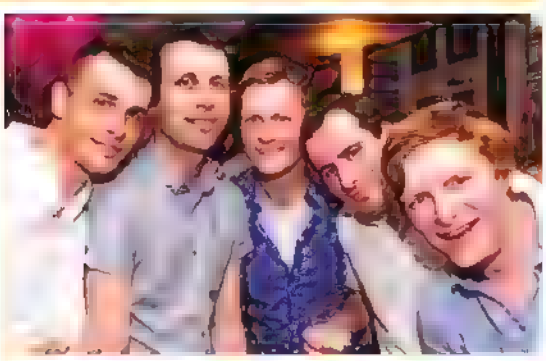
Alongside nice summertime weather, there's one other thing that really excites us. Yep, it's those cheeky top-less door hosts you'll find in [redacted] Birmingham's Gay Village!

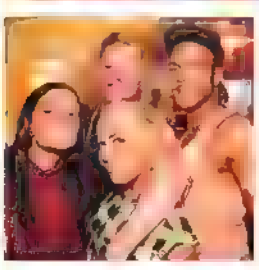
And as you can see, the buff boys are out in full force at Missing Bar, along with the fabulously extravagant Twiggy! Join them all on a Saturday night for We <3 Saturdays, great party fun that's certain to kick off your weekend in style

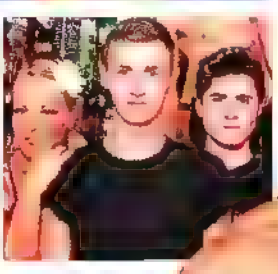
DJ Mykee takes to the decks to provide a fantastic playlist of music that's sure to get you hitting the dancefloor for a night of twerking, twisting and slutdropping. Boom!

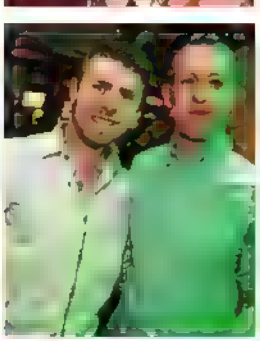


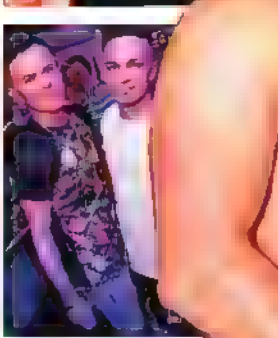












Pictures by **Laura Byrne**

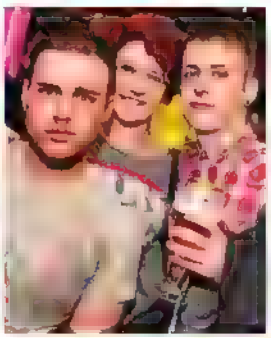
Let's get the party started at **The Village Inn**!

Each and every Saturday in Birmingham's gay village, one venue that's inevitably bursting at the seams with lively customers is The Village Inn.

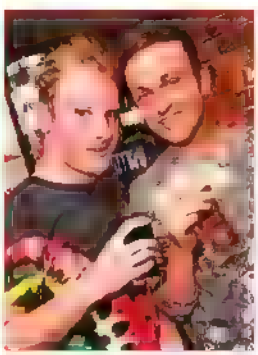
Join your hostess Charlotte the Harlotte, along with fabulous DJs Lotty and Richard Moon, for the party of the weekend! The very best in cheese, pop, R n'B, dance and commercial tracks means you're almost certain to be shuffling your way over to the dancefloor.

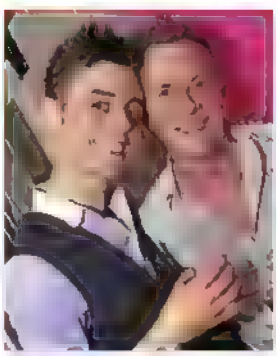
If you're a die-hard party-goer, check out The Village Inn on a Saturday - the venue keeps its doors open right through until 8am Sunday morning! Party on!

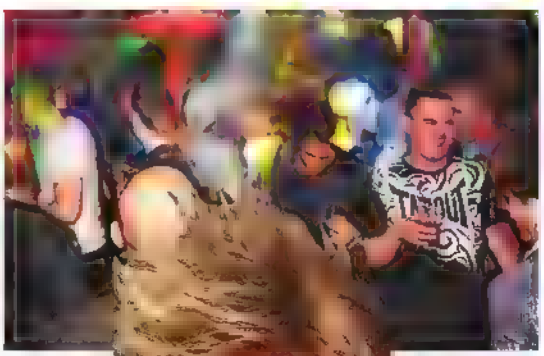
www.villagebirmingham.co.uk

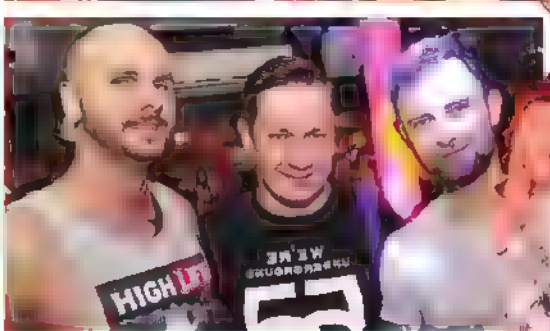


More great photos on **facebook**





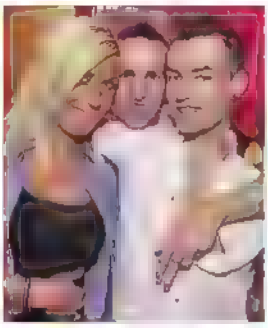


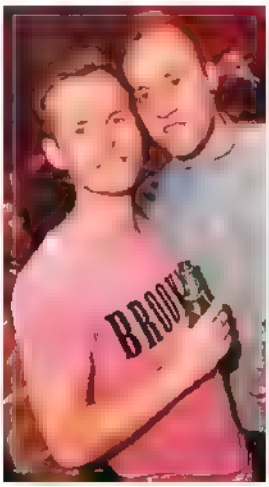


Charlotte the Harlotte hosts Saturday nights at The Village Inn

Pictures by Laura Byrne

Walk on the wild side at Birmingham's **Sidewalk**





If you're on a fun night out with your mates in Birmingham's gay village, pop in and say hi to the team at Sidewalk on Hurst Street.

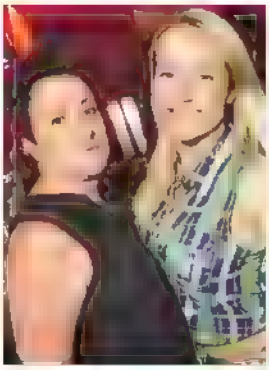
The venue, which takes its inspiration from bars in San Francisco, offers cheap drinks, great food, cocktails and more.

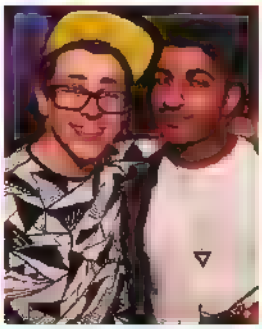
There are resident DJs on hand every weekend too, helping you get in the mood for hitting a club later in the evening.

Check out Sidewalk's Beach Party this month, taking place on Saturday 26 July. Get your swimmers on (we have a great selection on page 28), bring along your bucket and spade, and get in the mood to have some fun.

www.sidewalkbirmingham.com

More great photos on **facebook**





Kickstart the fun with dinner at **The Loft Lounge**

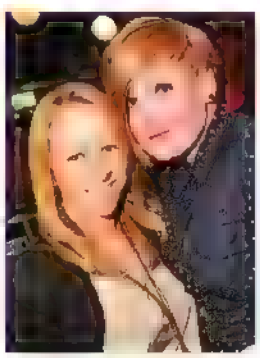
Fancy trying a different approach to starting your night out in Birmingham's gay village? If so, stop by The Loft Lounge on Bromsgrove Street for a spot of yummy food.

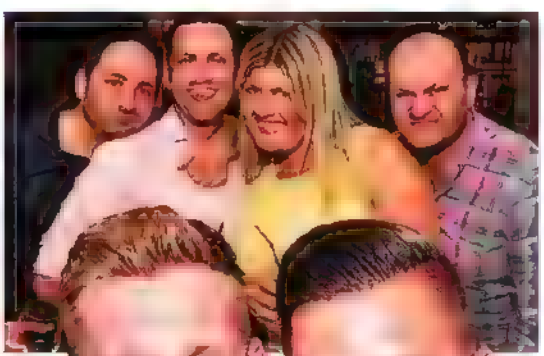
The popular venue's culinary team offer a fantastic menu that's bursting with flavour - so treat yourself and your mates to a lovely meal (along with a few two-for-one cocktails) before heading out on the town.

If you've already eaten, why not opt for a bottle of bubbly to kickstart your night in style? Whatever you choose to do, the Loft Lounge is a great place to get the ball rolling!

www.thelofttounge.co.uk

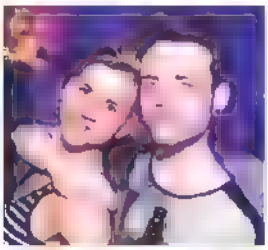
More great photos on **facebook**





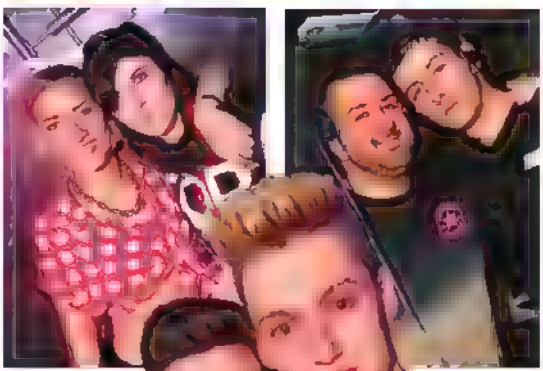
Pictures by Laura Byrne

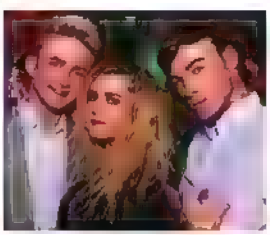
Enjoy three great floors of music at **The Nightingale**

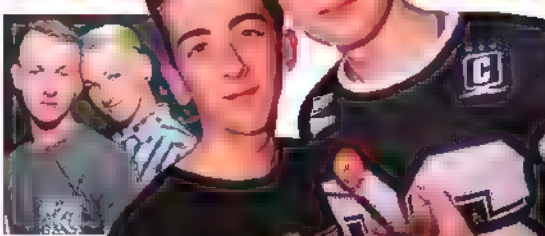


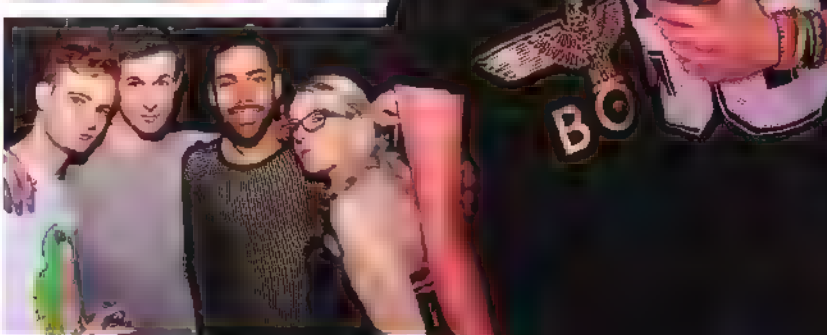
So you've been around Birmingham's gay village, visiting various bars. Now it's time to throw some shapes in a club. And what better kind of club can there be to throw shapes in than a gay super-club - namely, The Nightingale!

There are three floors of music to choose from. The main floor, with DJ Corey playing the best of today's hits and much more, the middle floor, where you'll find Marty with her fab cabaret show and a whole load of cheese, or the top floor, for tunes that are a bit dirtier and harder if you fancy a twerk or two! ... There really is something for everyone.









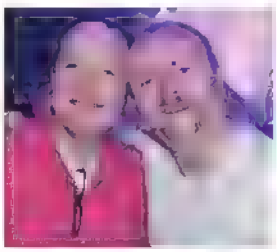
Pictures by **Laura Byrne**

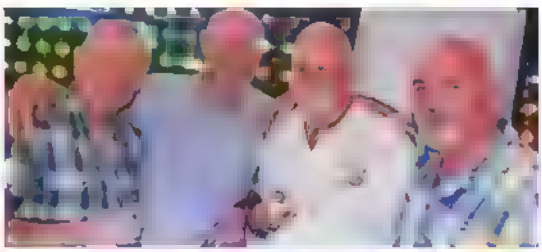
It's a man's world at Brum men-only night **XXL**

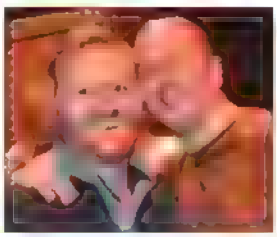
Popular London men-only club night XXL is still proving to be a hit with Midlands clubbers when it stops off in Birmingham on the third Friday of every month.

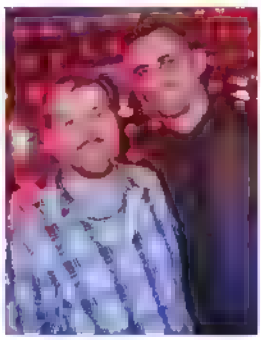
The event sees hundreds of guys gather at Core Club on Sherlock Street with just one thing in mind - to enjoy the electric atmosphere generated by the amazing selection of music from XXL's resident DJ Christian M

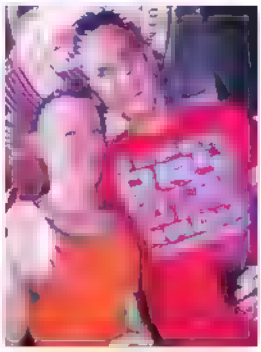
This month sees XXL return to Birmingham on Friday 18 July with admission to the event costing just a fiver. There are great drinks offers too, so you won't end up spending a fortune

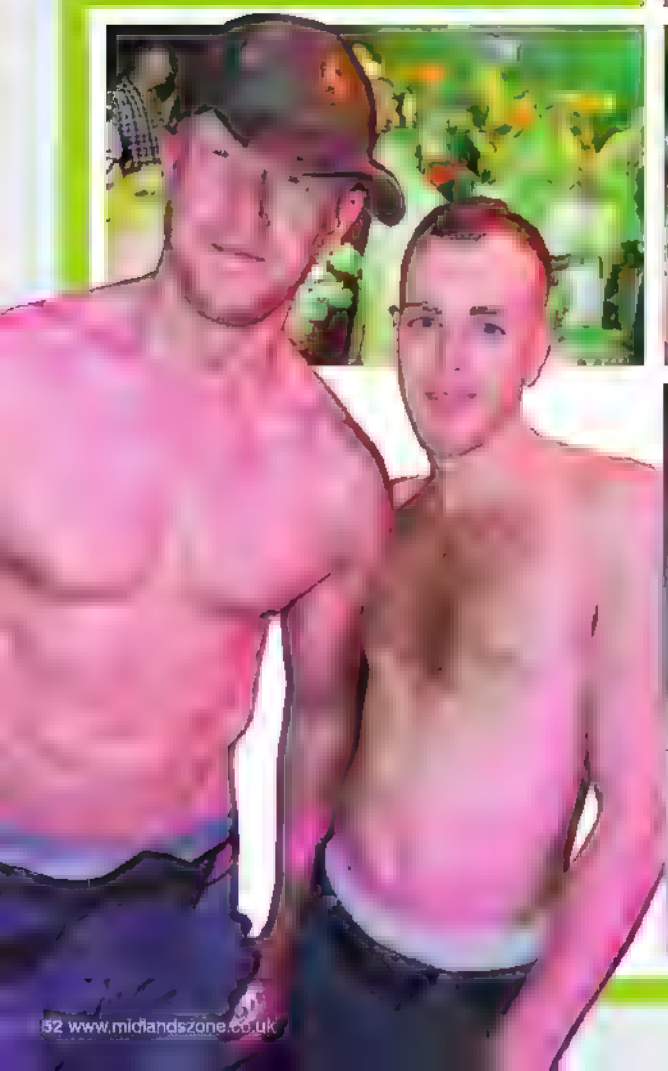


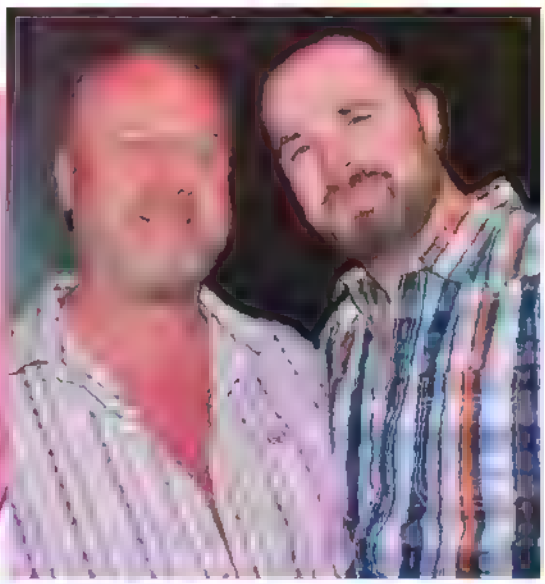












Birmingham

BAR JESTER
Holloway Circus,
B1 1EG
Tel: 0121 643 8344

BOLTZ CLUB
Lower Essex St, B5 6QP
Tel: 0121 666 6888

CLUB CHIC
28 Horsefair B1 1DD
Tel: 0121 666 6806

CLUB DV8
16 Lower Essex
St, B5 6H
Tel: 0121 622 1 6

THE CORE p37
Sherlock St, B5 6NB
Tel: 0121 622 2797
www.thecoreclub.co.uk
/thecoreclubbirmingham
See XXL pictures on page 52

EDEN BAR p45
Sherlock St, B5 6NB
Tel: 0121 622 1953
www.theedenbar.co.uk
/eden.bar
See pictures on page 44

EQUATOR
Hurst St, B5 6SE
Tel: 0121 622 5077

FOUNTAIN INN
Wrentham St B5 6QL
Tel: 0121 622 1452

THE FOX
17 Lower Essex St,
B5 6SN Tel: 0121 622 3213

LOFT LOUNGE p11
142 Bromsgrove St,
B5 6RG
Tel 0121 6222 444
www.theloftlounge.co.uk
The-Loft-Lounge
See pictures on page 51

MISSING BAR p47
Hurst St, B5 6NU
Tel: 0121 622 4256
www.missingbar.co.uk
/missingbar
See pictures on page 46

THE NIGHTINGALE p50
Kent St, B'ham
B5 6RD
Tel: 0121 622 1718
www.nightingaleclub.co.uk
/thenightingaleclub
See pictures on page 50

RSVP (formerly Queer Street)
For Exclusive Hire
Hurst St, B5 6SE
Tel: 0121 622 2444

SIDEWALK p33
Hurst Street,
B1 1EG
Tel: 0121 666 6220
www.sidewalkbirmingham.co.uk
See pictures on page 49

THE VILLAGE INN p42 &43
Hurst St B'ham
B5 4BD
Tel: 0121 622 4742
www.villagebirmingham.co.uk
/villageinnbirmingham
See pictures on page 48

THE WELLINGTON
72 Bristol St B5 7AH
Tel: 0121 622 2592

West Midlands

COVENTRY

RAINBOWS
Short St CV1 2LW
Tel: 02476 551738

GLOUCESTER

THE WESTGATE
Westgate Street
GL1 2NF
Tel: 01452 690045

KIDDERMINSTER

ROYAL EXCHANGE
31 New Road DY10 1AF
Tel: 01562 228819

LEEK

VALIANT
3 Stanley Street ST13 5HG
Tel: 01538 382812

SHREWSBURY

C21 CLUB p32
Abbey Foregate,
SY2 6AE
Tel: 01743 271821
www.c21bar.co.uk
/C21Nightclub
See pictures on page 41

THE PEACH TREE
21 Abbey Foregate,
Tel: 01743 355055
www.thepeachtree.co.uk
/ThePeachTreeRestaurant

SPIRIT
22 Abbey Foregate,
SY2 6AE
Tel: 01743 271821
www.spiritchampagne.co.uk
/SpiritShrewsbury

STOKE-ON-TRENT

THE FACTORY
67 Bryan St
Hanley, ST1 5AF

PINK
93 Stafford Street
ST1 1LS
Tel: 01782 272772

STOURBRIDGE

THE BELL
20 Market St DY8 1AG
Tel: 07826 518478

STRATFORD upon AVON

NO7
Prowd Crowd
1st Mon monthly
7 Windsor St
Tel: 07787 642510

TELFORD

THREE FURNACES
30 Bridgnorth Rd
Madeley TF7 4JB
Tel: 01952 588521

WALSALL

LION BAR & CLUB
Birchills St,
WS2 8NG
Tel: 01922 610977

THE RED LION p17
Park St WS1 1NW
Tel: 01922 637790

WOLVERHAMPTON

[illegible] CLUB
School St WV1 4LF
Tel: 01902 427247

THE WHITE HART
[illegible]
WV2 4LQ
Tel: [illegible]

WORCESTER

THE FLAG
50 Lowesmoor WR1 2SG
Tel: 01905 780467

VELVET CLUB
Angel Row WR1 3QN
Tel: 01905 20218

East Midlands

DERBY

THE CROWN INN
40 Curzon St DE1 1LL
Tel: 01332 381742

CURZONS
25 Curzon St DE1 1LH
Tel: 01332 363739

LEICESTER

DOVER CASTLE
34 Dover St LE1 6PT
Tel: 0116 255 3052

HELSINKI
94 Rutland St LE1 1SB
Tel: 0116 254 7568

RAINBOW & DOVE
185 Charles St LE1 1LA
Tel: 0116 254 7568

SLOANES
9-15 New Walk LE1 6RL
Tel: 0116 255 2220

[illegible]
(YOLO Gay every Wed
Belgrave Gate LE1 3GR
Tel: 0116 251 7986

MANSFIELD

CHEEKY MONKEY
Leeming St NG18 1NG
Tel: 01623 633330

NORTHAMPTON

THE [illegible]
College St NN1 2QP
Tel: 01604 604404

NOTTINGHAM

NEW [illegible]
St Ann's St NG1 3LX
Tel: 0115 958 0432

THE NEWMARKET INN
38 Lower Parliament
Street NG1 3BA. (Gay
Friendly)

NG1 CLUB
76-80 Lower Parliament,
St NG1 1EH
Tel: 0115 958 8440

PROPAGANDA
8 Broadway, NG1 1PS
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Wicked - Casting A Magical Spell On Birmingham

Offering proof that you simply can't please all of the people all of the time, Wicked dodged its fair share of slings and arrows when it opened in London in 2006. As far as many a broadsheet theatre critic was concerned, there was certainly no pot of gold at the end of this particular rainbow, let alone a big and mysterious wizard.

The proof of the pudding, however, is most definitely in the eating, and eight years after its West End debut, Wicked is still going strong - so much so, in fact, that it's now headed out on tour.

Based on novelist Gregory Maguire's ingenious reimagining of Frank L. Baum's famous tale, it's basically the story of The Wizard Of Oz as told from the perspective of two sorcery students, one of whom will become Glinda The Good, the other the Wicked Witch of the West.

If you've seen the show in London, chances are you'll be eager to catch it again when it visits the Midlands this month.

If, on the other hand, Oz is a land to which you've yet to travel, then follow the Yellow Brick Road to the Hippodrome box office just as fast as your ruby slippers will carry you.

Birmingham Hippodrome, Wed 9 July - Sat 6 Sept

Avenue Q

Described by The Times as 'the best musical of the decade', the Tony Award-winning Avenue Q focuses on subjects such as dating, racism, being gay and finding your purpose in life. At the centre of the story is Princeton, a bright-eyed college graduate with a tiny bank balance who's easily distracted by a busty blonde and a plethora of weird and wonderful friends.

Hilariously funny, Avenue Q is nonetheless probably not suitable for those who're easily offended,.

Lichfield Garrick, Thurs 24 - Sat 26 July

Rhys Darby

According to Jim Carrey, who knows a thing or two about being a popular funnyman, Rhys Darby - aka band manager Murray Hewitt in Flight Of The Conchords - is "just absolutely brilliant. He's got that Peter Sellers madness inside him".

Far be it from us to argue with so glowing an assessment from so well respected a source. Instead, we'll just settle for telling you that Rhys's shows tend to combine surreal musings, hilarious stories from his life and a healthy dollop of nonsense and fantasy. Jokes include "My girlfriend recently told me that she's into self-harming. So for her birthday I got her a hammer and said 'knock yourself out'."

Birmingham Town Hall, Sun 20 July

Rainbow Voices: Movie Night....

Presents an evening of music from stage and screen

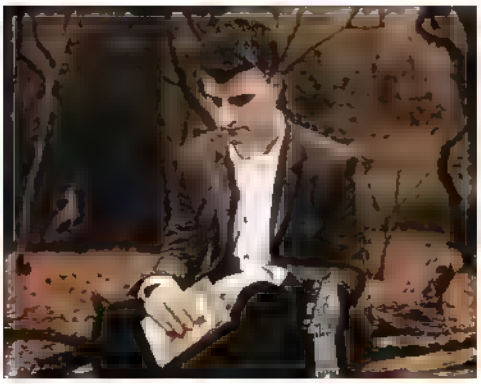
Birmingham-based LGBT choir Rainbow Voices turn 25 next year and here warm up their vocal chords in preparation for the celebration by presenting their annual summer concert. Performing a repertoire of iconic music from stage and screen, the choir are joined by the renowned Birmingham Gay Symphony Orchestra's string section, along with a variety of solo acts.
The evening of entertainment is hosted by much-loved comedian Mrs Barbara Nice

Birmingham Conservatoire, Birmingham, Sat 26 July

Robbie Williams

With six of his albums featuring among the top one hundred biggest selling in the UK, an entry in the Guinness Book Of World Records for selling over one-and-a-half million tickets for a tour in a single day, and a most eighty million record sales to his name worldwide, Midlands-born Robbie needs no introduction. Whether with Take That or as a solo artist, Williams is a heavyweight performer whose popularity has endured despite the passing of time and no shortage of negative publicity along the way.
He appears at the LG this month on the back of late-2013 album release Swings Both Ways, his second swing album after 2001's Swing When You're Winning and the fourth best-selling UK album of last year

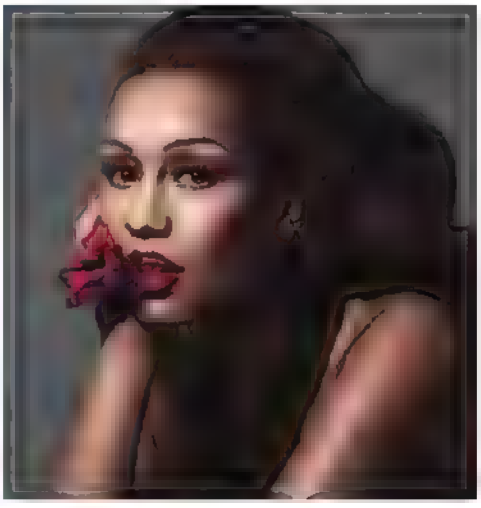
LG Arena, Birmingham, Sat 6 - Sun 7 July



Jim Moray

An established star of the contemporary folk scene, Jim Moray is widely considered to be one of the most consistently inventive musicians working in English traditional music today. This latest tour sees him showcasing music from his forthcoming album of traditional ballads, but fans will be equally eager for him to raid his back catalogue - with five groundbreaking albums to his name, there's no shortage of material they'll be happy to hear again. Very much at the forefront of the UK folk revival, Jim last year celebrated the tenth anniversary of landmark debut album Sweet England and looks set to add to the five BBC Radio Two Folk Awards already taking pride of place on his mantelpiece.

Stafford Gatehouse, Mon 7 July



Rebecca Ferguson

Pregnant with her third child she may be, but Liverpudlian Rachel Ferguson is showing no signs of slowing down. Despite a traumatic eighteen months during which she's dealt with stalkers and a court case around the fraudulent loss of £100,000, she's still found time to release new album Freedom, which has been certified Gold. Rebecca is performing her Up Close And Personal set in Coventry showcasing the extraordinary and powerful vocals that have seen her compared to Aretha Franklin, Nina Simone and Macy Gray

Ricoh Arena, Coventry, Fri 25 July

Transformers: Age Of Extinction CERT tbc

Starring **Mark Wahlberg, Stanley Tucci, Nicola Peltz, Jack Reynor, Kelsey Grammer, Sophia Myles** Directed by **Michael Bay (USA)**

Four years after the invasion of Chicago a mechanic (Wahlberg) and his daughter (Peltz, from TV's Bates Motel) stumble across a deactivated Optimus Prime (you know, the leader of the Autobots). Their lives are about to change forever... In 3D. Out 10 July

Dawn Of The Planet Of The Apes CERT tbc

Starring **John Lloyd Young, Erich Bergen, Michael Lamenda, Vincent Piazza, Christopher Walken** Directed by **Clint Eastwood (USA)**

Before The Beatles, the most popular rock band of all time was The Four Seasons. With number one hits like Sherry, Big Boys Don't Cry, Walk Like a Man and Rag Doll, the group racked up sales of an estimated one hundred million records worldwide. The Broadway musical that chronicled their amazing career went on to win four Tony awards and, in London, ensnared the Olivier for best new musical. Now Clint Eastwood, at a sprightly eighty-four years of age, has brought the musical to the big screen. Eastwood, while best known for Westerns and .44 Magnums, is a musical aficionado, having composed the scores for eight of his own films and originally intended to be a musician and not an actor (he still loves playing the piano). So, this could be a match made in Heaven. Out 17 July

Tammy CERT 15 (97 mins)

Starring **Melissa McCarthy, Susan Sarandon, Allison Janney, Toni Collette, Sandra Oh, Dan Aykroyd, Kathy Bates** Directed by **Michael Bay (USA)**

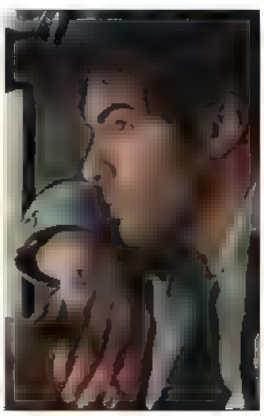
Now that she's a bona fide box-office star, Melissa McCarthy (Bridesmaids, Identity Thief, The Heat) takes solo billing above the title in this comedy. She plays Tammy, who takes to the road with her dipsomaniac grandmother (Sarandon) after losing her job, her car and her husband. Remember Thelma & Louise? Well, forget it. Out 4 July

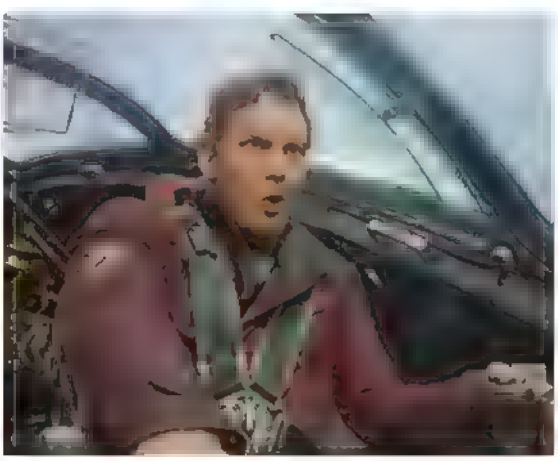
Grand Central CERT 15

(103 mins)

Starring **Tahar Rahim, Léa Seydoux, Denis Menochet, Olivier Gourmet, Johan Libéreau** Directed by **Rebecca Zlotowski (France Austria)**

Winner of the François Chalais Prize at Cannes, this is the story of a decontamination sub-contractor at a nuclear power plant in the lower valley of the Rhone. It doesn't sound very exciting, but the film deals with the everyday problem of radiation contamination and stars two of France's hottest young performers Tahar Rahim (A Prophet) and Lea Seydoux (Blue is the Warmest Colour). Out 18 July





Guardians Of The Galaxy CERT tbc

Starring **Gugu Mbatha-Raw, Tom Wilkinson, Miranda Richardson, Penelope Wilton, Matthew Goode, Emily Watson**
Directed by **Amma Asante (UK)**

Based on true events, this is the story of Dido Elizabeth Belle (Mbatha-Raw), a former slave who is brought up by her great uncle. What is surprising is that Dido is mixed race and her uncle was the 1st Earl of Mansfield, William Murray (Wilkinson). Consequently Dido is raised as an aristocrat. Mbatha-Raw herself was born in Oxford and made her film debut opposite Tom Hanks in Larry Crowne (2011). Out 25 July

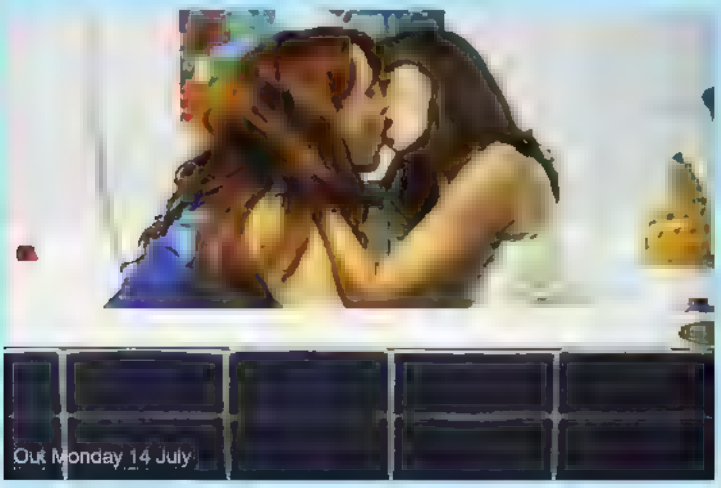
DVDs

Test (15)

Frankie is the new understudy for an up-and-coming San Francisco-based dance company in which six muscular male dancers move their way through bold, athletic choreography
Bad boy Todd, a handsome and established dancer, watches Frankie with interest, and opposites soon attract
When one of the dancers is injured Frankie must perform in his place It's the opportunity of a lifetime, but is Frankie good enough?
Outside of work Frankie and Todd's relationship deepens - and together they face a new kind of test
A disease is spreading across the city and few know anything about it, except who it targets. But as they quickly learn to navigate a world filled with risk, they also find there's plenty to feel hopeful about

Girls On Film: The First Date (18)

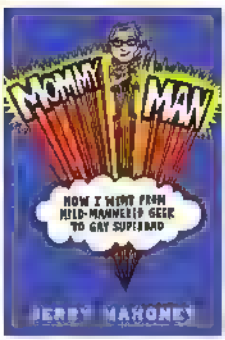
From the distributor that created the world's most successful short film collection, Boys On Film, comes a new series of lesbian short films. Girls On Film is set to feature some of the most provocative, engaging and beautiful filmmaking from around the world



...and something to read

Mommy Man by Jerry Mahoney

Jerry is living with his long-term boyfriend, Drew, and they're ready to take the plunge into parenthood. But how? Adoption? Fostering? Kidnapping? What they want most of all is a great story to tell their future kid about where he or she came from. Their search leads them to surrogacy. Thus begins Jerry and Drew's hilarious and unexpected journey to daddyhood. From then on, they're in uncharted waters. They're forced to face down homophobic baby store clerks, a hospital that doesn't know what to do with them, and even members of their own family who think they've gone crazy. One thing's for sure, though - if it all works out, they're going to have an incredible birth story!



New Music

Trouble In Paradise

La Roux

The second album from synthpop artist La Roux hits the streets this month, the first in five years. The first official single from the album comes in the form of Uptight Downtown. We're excited to hear the rest!

Live Life Living

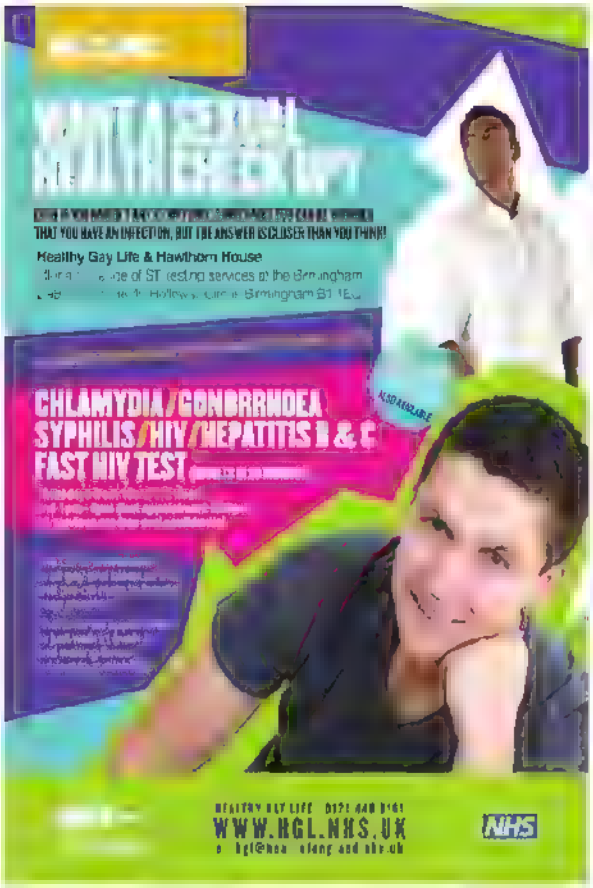
Example

Example is back this month with his fifth studio album. The twelve-track offering features All The Wrong Places as the album's lead track. Further singles include Kids Again and One More Day. It's also rumoured that there'll be an additional two singles coming from the album!

Now 88

Various Artists

The UK's longest running and most popular music compilation series returns this month with Now That's What I Call Music 88! It's a brilliant collection of smash hits from the past few months, spread across two CDs!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Baldness is now a choice...

With male pattern baldness affecting around two-thirds of men before they turn 40, there's no doubt that a hair transplant, done right, can be a life-changing investment...

Over the past few years, the hair transplant industry has exploded. Many men are now opting for the procedure, following in the footsteps of footballer Wayne Rooney, actor James Nesbitt, Dancing On Ice judge Jason Gardiner, entrepreneur and TV dragon Duncan Bannatyne, singer Jason Donovan, Olympic diver Peter Waterfield, X Factor judge Louis Walsh, and many more.

Although the cost is now much lower than Rooney's £30,000-plus hair transplant, the procedure is still expensive - so make sure that you've selected the right clinic. And there's no better clinic to choose than the one where the surgeons and the consultants have themselves undergone hair transplants. The only clinic that meets this criterion is FUE Hair Clinics.

In order to extract the hair follicles from the donor area, FUE Hair Clinics utilises two different methods. They either extract the follicles individually (known as FUE - Follicular Unit Extraction) or as a strip of follicles (known as FSE - Follicular Strip Extraction).

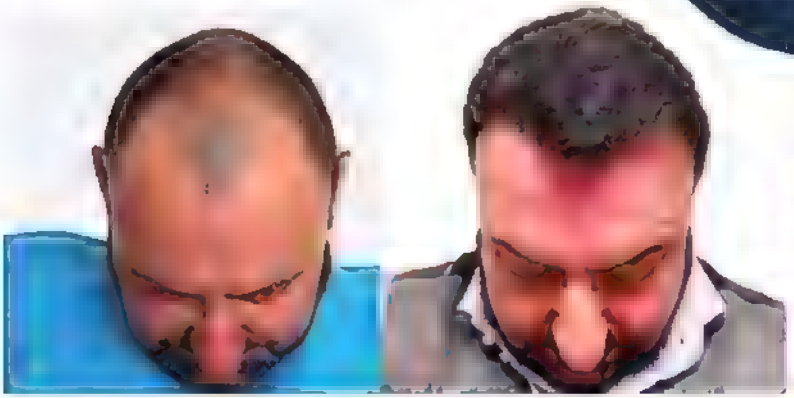
The individual FUE extraction method is preferable for younger men - as it doesn't leave any linear scars or stitches. This is important if the client's chosen hairstyle is a crew cut. This method requires more time and is more expensive.

There *are* cases, however, where there aren't enough hairs to extract individually - in which case, the only option is to remove a small strip of skin which carries a lot of hair. This strip extraction method leaves a fine, pale scar at the back of the head, which is easily covered by the client's own hair.

Because the donor area (the lower and middle portion of the back of the head) is the last area to be affected by the 'hair-killing' hormone DiHydroTestosterone (DHT), the new transplanted hair will stay for the longest possible time on the client's head, ensuring a permanent result.

The implantation of the follicles at the thinning areas is always done individually and at an angle. This mimics the client's original hair, hence achieving a natural-looking result.

After having a hair transplant himself, Michael Psaltakis, the Managing Director of FUE Hair Clinics, was so passionate about the procedure that he left his prestigious career as a senior international executive at Unilever to become a trichologist - an expert in the study of hair and the scalp - and founded the first FUE Hair Clinics. Now in his late-40s, Michael can easily be mistaken for someone in his mid-to-late-30s! Looking younger is one of the benefits of having a hair transplant.



Sexual health 'MOT' for gay and bisexual men launched in Coventry

HIV and sexual health charity Terrence Higgins Trust has launched a free sexual health 'MOT' for gay and bisexual men at Coventry's premier gay bar Rainbows.

Trained Terrence Higgins Trust staff will be on hand with free condoms, information, and advice on sexual health every Thursday from 8pm to 9.30pm. The team will also offer one-to-one support to those who decide to take the free rapid HIV testing service, called the FastTest. Testing involves a finger prick blood test, providing results in 20 minutes. Support will be provided before and after the test, and anyone who tests positive will be referred on to a specialist clinic.

There are more people living with HIV than ever before in the West Midlands. In 2012, there were an estimated 6,558 people living with HIV in the region and 22% of these people were undiagnosed. Gay and bisexual men remain one of the highest groups at risk of contracting HIV, with 144 new infections last year.

The team hope that the later service will appeal to many gay and bisexual men in the community who are unable to access services during working hours.

Lorraine Galatowicz, Centre Manager for Terrence Higgins Trust in Coventry, said, "We welcome working in partnership with Rainbows to host our sexual health 'MOT' groups. Our local sessions offer a safe and confidential space for anyone who wants to take an HIV test, or just get free advice and information. We would urge anyone who hasn't been tested or would like some more information to come for an 'MOT' at any one of our Thursday sessions."

For more information, call 02476 229292 or email info.coventry@tht.org.uk.

Leicester sexual health charity launches free counselling service

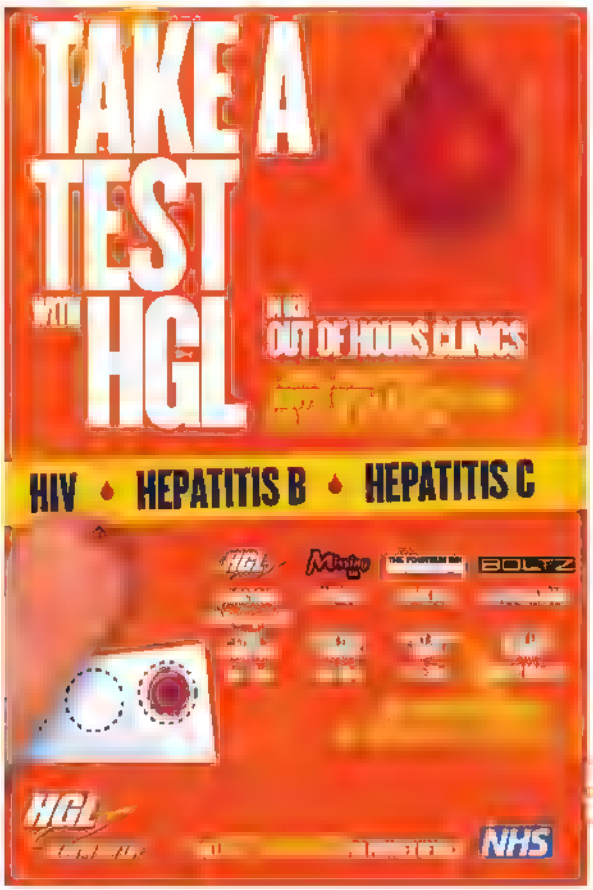
Leicester sexual health charity Trade has launched a free counselling service for the LGBT communities of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

Partially supported by funding from the local Police and Crime Commissioner, Trade's new service is called Approach.

"Approach will give the local LGBT communities a way of accessing services, or simply talking to a trained professional about their troubles and concerns," says Veronica, Trade's co-director and lead on the Approach project.

"We've got a great group of experienced counsellors working with us, and because Approach is a new service for Trade, there's currently little or no waiting time."

If you're interested in getting more information, or accessing the Approach counselling service, contact Trade on 0116 254 1747, or email info@tradesexualhealth.com.



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Walsall Centre for Sexual Health (GUM)
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LGBT Network Wolverhampton volunteers receive the 2014 Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

The commitment and dedication to supporting local gay people displayed by LGBT Network Wolverhampton's volunteers has been recognised with the 2014 Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

The prestigious award - the equivalent of the MBE - is the highest accolade given to volunteer groups across the UK.

The awards recognise and reward excellence in voluntary activities. They are given for outstanding achievement by groups of volunteers who regularly devote their time to helping others in the community, improving the quality of life and opportunity for others, and providing an outstanding service.

Martha Bishop, LGBT Network Wolverhampton's only paid worker, said she was thrilled that the volunteers who regularly give up their time to support the LGBT community had been recognised.

"It's thanks to all the volunteers we can provide all our services, activities and events, making a real difference to LGBT people. Five people in the last year have said they haven't committed suicide because of the support received. We offer counselling, advocacy, support to victims of hate crime, and we organise the annual Pride event, with a most 2,000 people attending. The volunteers are truly amazing, and we couldn't do it without them."

The Network's Chair, Pat McArdle, said "We are extremely delighted to receive the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. This is well deserved recognition for the hundreds of volunteers who have been instrumental in contributing so much to the LGBT network and wider community in Wolverhampton. They have made a real difference and clearly show how volunteering can benefit our communities."

Patron Peter Tatchell sent his congratulations to the volunteers. "Congratulations to LGBT Network Wolverhampton volunteers on being honoured with The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. This esteemed tribute is much-deserved recognition of the important work done in support of the local LGBT community. It shows that local authority funding gets results worthy of high commendation."

For more information about LGBT Network Wolverhampton

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THE GUDRUN LIMBRICK COLUMN

Sticks and stones...

Language is a ridiculously tricky thing. And it's particularly difficult when you're using it to describe minority groups. It's also very important to get it right. And virtually impossible to get it right all the time.

Years ago I ran a lesbian health group, and I still remember the pain of the endless debates about how we should/could describe ourselves.

The debates about the inadequacies of any of the available words were torturous and, of course, doomed to failure. The thing about language and the way we're described is that, although language is shared, our preferences are very individual.

Some people didn't like the word 'lesbian', others hated 'dyke', several objected to 'gay'. And we were all aware that, as soon as we tried to say something that reflected our true diversity - including bi women and trans women - our attempts at a catchy slogan turned into a lengthy essay.

While I'm not sure that we ever found a way of describing all of us as a group that was completely right for all of us, I think the very act of the discussion meant that we didn't get it totally wrong.

There are, of course, some recent examples of people getting it spectacularly wrong.

In a landmark case, the US Patent and Trademark Office has cancelled the six trademark registrations held by the Washington Redskins - an American football team - on the basis that the name is disparaging to Native Americans.

This is being lauded as a major victory in a battle about the use of the word 'redskins' which has been running for decades. People have argued that it's just a word - and they're right, of course. But it's a word that a minority group which has been struggling for fair recognition and rights for generations finds offensive. Yes, it's just a word - but the word represents their oppression.

Justin Bieber - the boy-man - and Jeremy Clarkson - the dick - have both recently been embroiled in controversy over the use of the n-word - a word that all rightminded people know is so offensive that even reporting its use is censored by not repeating the word in full. Quite how either Bieber or Clarkson have maintained their positions and popularity is beyond me - although I've never really understood how they got famous in the first place.

I hate the existence of these high-profile uses of stupid language, but can also see the worth. We have to keep debating and reviewing the language we use so that we understand why some terms are unacceptable to some people. It's not true that words will never hurt us - they can be significant tools to misrepresent, taunt and oppress minority groups.

It's also of paramount importance, of course, to keep finding (metaphorical) sticks and stones with which to beat Jeremy Clarkson, in the hope that one day he'll get the message and disappear from our TV screens.

ON THE BALL with Steve Ball

Gender matters

Let's be honest. I'm not a big fan of The Sun. So when the free copy arrived on my doorstep last week, I was in two minds what to do with it.

There was a time when gays and lesbians were fair game for the tabloid press. Being gay was in itself enough of an excuse for The Sun and other Red Tops to slag us all off. Back in May 1990, The Sun's editorial reminded us that "Readers of The Sun know and speak and write words like poof and poofter. What is good enough for them is good enough for us".

Since then, a lot has changed. The likes of Sir Elton John, Clare Balding and Tom Daley are recognised by the rest of society and the tabloids as national treasures, famous as much for their achievements as their sexuality.

But whilst the tabloids may finally have caught up with lesbians and gays in modern Britain, transsexuals are still the object of ridicule and discrimination in parts of the press. In a Sun 'exclusive' on 20 April, they reported that "65-year-old ex- jailbird dad of four demands £20k NHS op to turn him from Doug into Roxanne". Predictability the paper interviewed neighbours to ascertain their less-than-generous views, and used every form of pejorative statement available to demonise Roxanne.

Yet transsexuals are becoming more visible. Dana International and Concita Wurst have both won the Eurovision Song Contest, and Grayson Perry is hugely admired as an artist who's pushed pottery and transexualism into the mainstream.

So why are the tabloids so slow to get with it? Is it because they're running out of scapegoats? Or is it that they - like some of us in the LGBT community - are a bit confused?

Trans people don't easily fit into simple compartments, and the term 'trans' includes drag queens and cross-dressers as well as anyone who doesn't identify with the gender they were assigned at birth or who's simply unsure or questioning.

Maybe that's too broad and complex a notion for some journalists to understand. After all, you couldn't do justice to that in a tabloid headline.

Quotes of the month...

Here we take some of our favourite (and often controversial) comments from www.midlandszone.co.uk, Facebook page and Twitter feed...

Complaints made over La Voix's Britain's Got Talent act

Anyone who complained needs help. There was nothing offensive about La Voix's performance. I hope Ofcom filed the complaints in their 'whatever' drawer, never to be looked at or bothered with ever again.
Scott Davidson (via Facebook)

I bet these are the same people who take their kids to see Christoper Biggins as Madame Twinky in pantomime at Christmas!
Joey Holgate (via Facebook)

Absolutely ridiculous! What about Danny la Rue in the 1970s? He was watched and loved by all. Some people need to get a life!
Catherine Hayes (via Facebook)

I agree with Catherine. Danny la Rue and Lilly Savage - there are a lot of people who loved the two acts I've just named. There's nothing wrong with the Britain's Got Talent act being shown before 9pm. Just people with narrowminded opinions!
Abii Douthwaite (via Facebook)

What Max says about his hair transplant?

I had an excellent experience and result. I'm thankful for what FUE Hair Clinics have done n would recommend them to anyone thinking of doing the same as me!

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